

Inside Here: dispersal as a strategy in landscape-based critical-
documentarist art practice

Submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, School of Arts and Humanities

Royal College of Art

2024

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Word count: 38,400



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09.09.2024 K M Bosny

Abstract

In the uncertain nature of our present time generated by conflicted relations with the material and virtual landscape, dispersal (as opposed to distribution) becomes a productive strategy. My landscape orientated, processual, critical-documentarist art practice presents images of sorts, and effects that move through space, and offers experiences of concrete realisations of movement, abstraction, and figures which are actualised within the field of encounters. My practice-based research develops close readings of moving image works, that documented trans-continental structures as paths through the landscape, and an interpretation of Joyce Wieland's *La raison avant la passion / Reason over Passion* (1969 – 1983), Robert Smithson's *The Spiral Jetty* (1970 – 1972), and Sophie Calle's *Double Blind / No Sex Last Night* (1996). This research argues that structural film strategies are at odds with the concept of the frame as a device marking a bounded space. My videos: *we all look at the same sky* and *water drawing* (2019), and video installation: *the sky is taught by falling* (2023), move through the landscape while investigating the conceptual thinking around the transitional edge, a paradoxical understanding of the frame.

In the works discussed in this research, the frame is conceptualised as a link between transition and movement. The nonlinearity of perceptions is brought into play to inform interpretations of different sites and practices, reaching out in directions beyond art practice. The reading of artworks considers abstraction and presentation, practices that are necessarily material, the space of a journey and Derrida's punning neologism, *différance* to derive a theoretical position, a picturesque nonlinearity. These are strategies to which my practice refers, while pointing outwards to framing of space as space/time put forward by cultural geography, holding open the possibility of an open future. Smithson's multiple artwork, Wieland's earlier structural film, and Calle's recursive diaristic procedure disassemble the political realm's picturesque and sublime manifestations while documenting with, and near to, the essential daydream. This thesis argues, strategies of dispersal, within landscape-based critical-documentarist art practice, produce and expose an interpretation of the frames, the image frame and the frame as a conceptual device in these works. By working creatively and re-creatively with understandings of transition and movement art practitioners and others using moving image and videoing transform uncertainty and address conflicting ideas about spaces and the landscape. Practitioners are empowered to recognise new ways to address being in the world. Dispersal (as opposed to distribution) becomes a productive strategy as the nature of the process of production of space.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my appreciation to my supervisory team: Nicky Hamlyn and Jonathan Miles, and I'm extremely grateful to Dr. Teal Triggs for her support with this research and with the development of itinerant space journal. I am also indebted to Dr. Johnny Golding, Dr. Rachel Garfield, and Dr. Hala Mansour for their time and attention during the final stages of this research and to examiners: Dr. Esther Leslie and Dr. Simon Payne for their knowledge and expertise. And finally, special thanks to all those at RCA and elsewhere, who generously supported my research journey with their patience and feedback.

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Chapter One

Introduction

The attention in this research is on the language of film and what is said in specific moving image works. This research worked towards an economy in film practice, not privileging one or the other but rather, considering the language of the experience. In the writing of this thesis the writing has become practice, complicating and strengthening the event of practice by its implicating itself into writing. The relationship between the plastic and the language complicates the relationships around what is thought and form in image and text. In this sense, the text has worked me out rather than my working it out. The practice progresses from the impulse to attend to ideas and associations that structure the material landscape, and the writing set out to lead the reader along a path. A path's collectivist nature and inherent language presupposes an available destination. While this introduction points to a conclusion which can be understood as the destination in the writing, in the practice the destination is complicated in the sense that presence is affective and shown in a very material way. Discussion in this thesis is on the freeing up of thought affording the quality of drift in a free play of associations. The path that is presented in the works discussed in this research affords the possibility of a different outcome each time and this can lead, consequently, to new ideas (Burgin, 2020).¹ The works affectively document the landscape, and the practice critically engaged with the material structures and the ideological structures (and rituals) that engendered them. In the sense that democracy is an ethics, and each work documents a material path using film or video in ways supportive of thinking and process, all the works discussed in this research move towards an ethics.

The ongoing conversations in and around experimental video and film practice have spun off into the virtual dimensions of online space and this research reaches back to earlier influences to tease out some ideas that are applicable to the current practice. Ideological structures are conceptualised as frames. My own critical-documentarist art practice uses digital video and video installation to document paths as frames in public green spaces.² As a contribution to new knowledge, this research investigated the conceptual thinking around the frame as a transitional edge. This is a paradoxical understanding of the frame and in the artworks discussed strategies of dispersal deny its agency. The frame is conceptualised as linkages to transition and movement affording the viewer agency in the work. Interruption to consumption is part of the

¹Victor Burgin links thinking otherwise to open-ended ways of thinking that are 'fundamental' to a true democracy (2020, 138). Democracy in this sense, as an ethics, brings to mind something Jean Luc Nancy writes in his discussion on the sublime, where he links presentation to freedom and in this way presentation, schematism, can be understood as an ethics. For Nancy 'the sensible thing is the beautiful, the figure presented by schematism without concepts. The condition of the schematism is nothing other than freedom itself' (2003, p. 239).

² The presentation of the video in an installation format includes still photography and graphite drawing (C.4).

process of making the work and the works show the other side of materiality, disallowing representation.

Chapter Two starts with a discussion on representation and presentation.³ Representation alludes to an inherent political structure however, Jacques Rancière's aesthetic principle speaks against it. In the aesthetic regime these structures (of the representative regime) are dispersed (Rancière, 2009). Rancière calls for an aesthetic economy (one that is not representable or distributed).

Aesthetic existence involves us in an indistinction of "same" and "other." It is thus a truly unrepresentable moment (but not a "beyond") wherein the density of being in its "here" is invaded by a "nowhere," a "nothing" (Wall, 1999, p. 15).

This is a strategy that comes out of Rancière's theorising on critical artworks more generally, as an uncertain mode of practice. This art is in a balance between two kinds of politics, art as lived in everyday life, and the disconnection of aesthetic experience from experience more generally (Rancière et al., 2009, p. 36).⁴ In his writing Rancière used the phrase *partage du sensible*, which was translated as, *distribution of the sensible*. While the term *partager* refers to sharing, it also can be translated as separating, partitioning. While this term is more usually translated as distribution, and distribution is a sharing out, it denotes a space that is bounded. In using the term *partager* Rancière brings into view partitions, and these are understood in this research as ideological structures that can act as partitions, the lines or paths in the discussion of moving image works.

The path has a dimension as a social structure, a political structure supporting representation. In this sense the path is a conceptual frame. The path also has a subjective dimension when thought of as a journey. This quality of path is found in my video practice in the sense that my presence is dispersed in the artwork and while I am the agent of the work, the viewer is also afforded agency, opening the possibility of political debate. My borrowed phrase, ideas and associations, links to a discussion on the politics of the daydream as a process where 'you rarely arrive where you intended' (Burgin, 2020, p. 142). The daydream is an inherently human form of contemplation Gaston Bachelard tells us in *Poetics of Space* (1994, p. 6-7). Thought of in the sense of Burgin's discussion, it exemplifies an open-ended way of thinking where significance is in the process. Space is inherently dispersed, open-ended, and ungraspable in its complexity.

³ For Henri Lefebvre representation can be understood as abstraction while space shown in ways alluding to experience is denoted 'representational' implicating time (2011, p. 42).

⁴ Exemplified by the arts and crafts movement and the Modernist project.

The impulse to document ideas and associations that function as frames comes out of Rancière and is a form of resistance to the processes of distribution and monetisation in the material and virtual landscapes.

This research is in the field of art practice and takes a definition of space from cultural geographer Doreen Massey's argument in her analysis of spatial theories, *For Space* (2015). Massey theorised space and time together as space/time in terms of trajectories of 'stories-so-far' made up of 'embedded material practices' (2015, p. 9). Recognising the role of time in external things and the material dimension of space and imagination, is key to understanding experience (2015, p. 58). In Massey, once the role of space in experience is brought into view, space is theorised as relational. Insofar as it affords political debate, conceptualising space as relational, and space and time together as space/time, affords the viewer agency and this is shown in the works discussed in this research. In this sense meaning cannot be captured and fixed and affords a critical approach to life more generally (Massey, 2015, p. 15). The moving image works discussed in this research offer forms that are recursive, vertiginous and open-ended. They are within critical-documentarist art practice and experimental film and document trans-continental structures as paths in the landscape.

Chapter Three is on the thinking around the frame in Joyce Wieland's *La raison avant la passion / Reason over Passion* (1969 – 1983), Robert Smithson's *The Spiral Jetty* (1970 – 1972), and Sophie Calle's *Double Blind / No Sex Last Night* (1996). The works by Wieland, Smithson and Calle have similarities that acknowledge subjectivity's material dimension and support the potential for political debate. Burgin links thinking otherwise to open-ended ways of thinking that are 'fundamental' to a true democracy (2020, p. 138). Politics determines the terms of 'inevitable' change as Massey observed in her paper *Landscape as a Provocation* (2006, p. 13). and similarly to Burgin's earlier use of the phrase, her call for, 'thinking otherwise' is linked to the freeing up of thought. She argued for open-endedness and the openness of space as becoming (2015, p. 59).

If experience is not an internalised succession of sensations (pure temporality) but a multiplicity of things and relations, then its spatiality is as significant as its temporal dimension. This is to argue for a way of being and thinking otherwise – for the imagination of a more open attitude of being; for the potential outwardlookingness of practised subjectivity (2015, p. 58).

Baruch Spinoza's conceptualisation of affect, imagination's material, corporeal, dimension is drawn on insofar as affect is theorised in the awareness of other bodies in a progression from

the balance between an ‘understanding of human individuality’ and ‘a basic sociability’ in Massey (2015, p. 188). The works discussed in this research are very personal images and this is affective. Although I do not document trans-continental paths, these artists are present in their works in the way I am present in mine. They use a performative way of documenting the landscape in the sense that they keep corporeality, the body, in view. The social as a political dimension, is brought into view as a frame(s).

Methodology

The discussion in Chapter Four is on the ways in which my practice documents presence and the landscape. The performative dimension is shown in a contrast between the linearity of the path and the dispersed form of the image. Barbara Bolt draws on Judith Butler’s theory of performativity and iterative, generative practice and on Jacques Derrida’s ideas about repetition and iteration to explore the place of iteration in research in her paper *Artistic Research: A Performative Paradigm* (2016).⁵ The iterative process inherent to art practice, is described by Derrida as ‘the mechanism through which there is movement and transformation’. He used the term *différance* to explain ‘each iteration is a “constitutive, productive and originary causality”’. *Différance* is the ‘process of scission and division which would produce or constitute different things or differences’ (Derrida quoted in Bolt, 2016, p. 10). Bolt explains that ‘we have seen that knowledge emerges from the mutability that is inherent in iterability within performative iterative practice, and our task is to find ways to map the movement that arises in and through the research experience’ (2016, p. 18). Working this way correlates with what Massey describes as Derrida’s fundamental recognition of space in his concept *différance*, playing with the pun which ‘holds within it an imagination of both the temporal and the spatial’ in accord with Massey’s space/time and ‘stories-so-far’, linking to both deferral and differentiation (2015, p. 49). Meaning cannot be captured and fixed instead meaning is, in effect, pushed up the path, deferred (allowing difference) in an experience that is recursive and iterative.

Linda Candy in *Practice Based Research: A Guide* (2006), explains that in practice-based research, ‘whilst the significance and context’ of the research project’s contribution to knowledge and originality are presented in text, ‘a full understanding can only be obtained with direct reference to the outcomes’ which may be ‘in the form of designs, music, digital media, performances and exhibitions’. Research outcomes are produced using ‘a structured process’.

⁵ Butler tells us, ‘What we take to be an internal feature of ourselves is one that we anticipate and produce through certain bodily acts, at an extreme, an hallucinatory effect of naturalized gestures’ (Butler and Salih, 2010, p. 94).

In contrast for Candy, practice-led research is 'concerned with the nature of practice and leads to new knowledge that has operational significance for that practice' and practice-led research can be explained 'in text form without the inclusion of a creative work' (2006, p. 1). This is an artistic research project using an iterative process within a structured process. To contribute to new knowledge, the 'research process common to professional practice has to be defined and executed in a manner that is commonly agreed' (2006, p. 2).⁶ My research fits within Candy's definition of practice-based research; my practice should be referred to fully understand the research.

Research Question and Contribution to Knowledge

This section is on the theoretical scaffolding between geography, landscape, and art practice. An introduction to my research questions is followed by an outline of my contribution to knowledge. To support my position, structural film practice and structural materialism (1973-81) in film is introduced and leads to the discussion on ideological and material structures, and the metaphor of path found in experimental and structural film.

Research Question

This PhD research by project contributes to the understanding of artistic use of dispersal in critical-documentarist, landscape-based art practice and the ways in which strategies of dispersal might be productively used in art practice. Therefore, this research asks: what are the ways in which strategies of dispersal contribute to the image space and the frame, considering the thinking around the frame as a conceptual device and how it is viewed?

For Massey, space, when considered to be always in process and relational, opens the potential for multiplicity. With 'multiplicity and space as co-constitutive', engagement becomes meaningful; the future is open (2015, p. 9). This research aligns with Massey's position in *Landscape as a Provocation* where she explained the 'disappearance of certainty' in conceptualisations of space and, in a progression the landscape, is a condition crucial for the existence of a democratic open-ended process (Deutsche quoted in Massey, 2006, p. 20). She further observed that politics determines the terms of inevitable change (2006, p. 13). However, this research points to something that could be looked at elsewhere. The strategies of dispersal used in the works discussed support a critical approach to life more generally, and this is the debate to which this research refers. A focus on the application of political theory is outside the scope of this research.

⁶ Defined by UK Research and Innovation Arts and Humanities Research Council (UKRI).

Contribution to new knowledge

The video practice is within the traditions and parameters of experimental, documentary, and structural film, and the three landscape genres. The research brings materialism into a relationship with the notion of space as becoming. The way in which artists documented the actual landscape in moving image works is investigated and material and ideological structures are brought into view as frames. Dispersive strategies deny the frame agency and an understanding of the material landscape, derived from a notion of the picturesque, is shown in these works. This is a paradoxical understanding of the frame as a transitional edge in the sense that it affords the viewer agency in the work, opening the possibility of political debate. The frame is conceptualised as linkages to transition and movement. Meaning cannot be captured and fixed. Instead, artworks connect with the experience of the viewer in the sense of the recursive process found in Burgin's politics of the daydream. This is a non-teleological understanding of space and the landscape.

Next steps:

The contexts Rancière brought to distribution, and the dispersive strategies used by the artists discussed in Chapter Three, is brought to Lucy Lippard's observation that conceptual artists thought of communication in terms of distribution (2001, p. xvii). These artists worked within Correspondence Art and Boris Groys tells us this art movement influenced the developing internet (2010, p. 10). My serial work *home is where the heart is* (ongoing) when shared to different online platforms is investigative of affordance and a possible new economy within a multiple artwork online. This is a progression from forming an economy within a multiple artwork offline and in this sense this research progresses from a position on including multiple works or forms within a title, from Smithson, Wieland and Calle (C.5).⁷

Critical-documentarist art practice

This research argues that strategies of dispersal transform uncertainty; uncertainty becomes a productive quality. Uncertainty is not a lack. Instead, it is the value of critical-documentarist art practice (Hito Steyerl, 2011, para. 4.). This is in accord with Rancière's theorising on critical

⁷These artists included multiple works within a title and used collaborative practices. To consider this approach, drawing and photography is included in Part 3 of the practice and a collaborative approach was instigated. This resulted in the development of a new academic research journal, *itinerant space*, an online platform supportive of research practice. My explorative video *vault*, 2019, can be found on *itinerant space*, Issue 1: the pilot (soft-launched in 2021). Keyword: dispersal. Issue 1 carries contributions from research students in the School of Communication at RCA. Once the peer review process and guidelines were refined a call was opened to all the schools in RCA. A video from my serial work *home is where the heart is* (2024) can be found in Issue 2: iterations (published in 2024) Keyword: dispersal (Overview of Practice document).

artworks more generally, as an uncertain mode of practice. By privileging the subjective view artworks complicate representation and landscape is presented as uncertain. When viewing these works, a continual reassessment of position is required affording the viewer agency in how the work is conceptualised.

Strategy

The term strategy is used to denote a connection with the social in a way that participates in Walter Benjamin's project where he theorised film in terms of the experience of the medium (2008).

Theorist Esther Leslie observed in her analysis of his work, *Overpowering Conformism* (2000)

'Technik includes reference to social relations and, as such, is a category of experience' (p. xii). In Benjamin, time is a non-linear process, and materialism can be understood in terms of interactions.

Humans work upon physical things and materialism questions the ways in which they do this and the relationships into which they enter in order to do this and how this alters their thoroughly historical human nature (2000, p. ix).

For Benjamin 'technik covers social and political relations, as well as the empirical fact of machinery' (2000, p. xii). When he used this term 'he is mindful of a complex of human relations of ownership and control' (2000, p. xii). In the works discussed in this research, dispersive strategies complicate representation, the path is not represented. While it is shown to organise groups of people and affect decision making, its subjective dimension as a journey, Massey's stories-so-far of relational space, is also shown. This is where the political effects can be found, and insofar as trans-continental paths are documented as frames in the landscape, the path is a questioning form. In this sense it is presented in dispersed terms and shown to be open-ended.

Path

This leads to a discussion on the image itself as a form of path, in accord with structural film's enquiry into its own production. Chapter Three progresses from a close reading of the works by Smithson, Wieland and Calle, a method derived from a critical practice used in literary analysis.

The phrase 'close reading' may seem to imply primary emphasis on the text itself, but the examination of text occurs within and gains significance only when it is embedded in inquiry, engages with theory, and generates an argument that is useful to others...that can be adapted and applied to other texts and even to other subjects (Bass and Linkon, 2008, p. 247).

The aim is to acknowledge the intentions of the artists and strategies they brought to structural film, a new way of working in film. The works each take a chiastic form. Smithson included a spiral

structure and documented the landscape in terms of recursivity and iterative process.⁸ The path is presented as a metaphor in *The Spiral Jetty* film (1972) when he walked and ran on the structure's rough surface (C.3.1). In this multiple work, he used scale/duration in a way correlative to Massey's space/time of relational space. Architectural theorist Jane Rendell observed that Smithson's dialectic of site and non-site is an early and possibly the initial investigation into relational space using art practice (1996). He documented his path as material and as an ideological structure.

However, in contrast to Smithson's way of working within the Land Art movement and making earthwork structures, my videos each document an existing path, in its role as a material and an ideological structure in urban green spaces. The research develops a definition of path, in a progression from social anthropologist Tim Ingold's analysis in *Lines* (2007) and *Life of Lines* (2015).

The forms people build, either in the imagination or on the ground, arise within the current of their involved activity, in the specific relational contexts of their practical engagements with their surrounding (Ingold, quoted in Massey 2015, p. 151).

The works by Smithson, Wieland, and Calle complicate the path. The collectivist dimension that Ingold discussed, is acknowledged while the relational dimension as a journey is also documented. In the analysis in Chapter Three the discussion is on trans-continental structures, and these structures are paths through the landscape. However, the artists are present in the work and the personal, that which is deemed to be irrelevant to the public realm, is shown (Hannah Arendt, 1998, p. 71).

Imagination

Arendt's final lectures, published in 1989, explored the meanings in Kant's writing on imagination, which she connected with movement.⁹ In Kant the beautiful is understood through shared cultural judgements and nature. While the works discussed in this research are very personal works, they present the material landscape in its infinitude. To do so their open-ended artworks reach toward

⁸ A chiasmus uses the form, ABB'A' exemplified by, we shape our buildings, and afterward our buildings shape us. It is an inversion in text that is also suggestive of the spiral in Smithson's work. Three dimensional spirals are enantiomorphic forms and take a left- or right-handed shape that may seem identical, although one will not fit into the space of the other.

⁹ Hannah Arendt's final lectures explore the meanings in Kant's writing on imagination in his *Critique of Judgment* (1790). She explains, Kant moved away from mimesis (representation). We see beauty in art in relation to nature, morality connects to nature and art, and these are shared judgments. Kant's sub-language is in accord with late Modernity and so is not archaic. In Kant, intuition is sensibility, while concept understanding, with imagination as the 'common root' (Arendt, 1989, p. 81). Arendt explained, intuition says, 'this' while understanding adds 'table'. The term 'this', relates only to this specific item, 'table identifies it and makes the object communicable'. The imagination is the process where something like an image, the schema in Kant, allows for a movement from the intuition to understanding (1989, p. 80-81).

the sublime.¹⁰ Jean Luc Nancy argued for and against Kant in his discussion on the sublime (2003). Imagination is theorised in Nancy as freedom, an ethics. He developed a notion of the sublime as a limit, or rather, insofar as it is a movement, a limit is where the sublime can be found.

This limit, in Kantian terms, is that of the imagination.... We receive an analogical indication of this maximum in the greatness of certain objects both natural and artificial, for example, in oceans or pyramids. But these objective grandeurs, these very figures, are precisely nothing but analogical occasions for thinking the sublime. In the sublime, it is not a matter of great figures but of absolute greatness (Nancy, 2003, p. 225).

Nancy's analysis elucidates a relationship between the beautiful and the sublime that is contingent on an inversion. In the sublime, imagination although 'syncopated' (faded), is 'still the faculty of presentation, and like the beautiful, the sublime is still tied "to mere presentation"'. He observed, 'it is not beyond the beautiful: it is merely the beautiful's unbordering, on the border itself, not going beyond the border...'. For Nancy the greatness of the sublime resides in its possibility. He further observed 'the entire affair of the sublime occurs on the edges of works of "fine art", on their borders, frames, or contours: on the border of art, but not beyond art' (2003, p. 232). 'The sublime is a feeling and yet, more than a feeling in the banal sense, it is the emotion of the subject at a limit', a subject that trembles on its own edge, linked to becoming (2003, p. 233).¹¹

An open-ended line of thinking

Massey notes that Gilles Deleuze observed in his writing on Henri Bergson, '...space seemed less and less reducible to a fiction separating us from this psychological reality, rather it was itself grounded in being' (Deleuze, quoted in Massey, 2015, p. 58). She supported the Spinoza, Bergson, Deleuze line of thinking about space as becoming, however in Massey space is made up of 'embedded material practices' (2015, p. 9). Bergson's acknowledgement of duration is key. In *Creative Evolution*, 1907, Bergson seemingly imagines space in terms equal to representation, however, Bergson's interest was in time (as duration) and he acknowledged duration 'in external things' (Massey, 2015, p. 24).¹² The

¹⁰ Nancy observed, 'In the Sublime, then, presentation is at stake: neither something to be presented or represented nor something that is nonpresentable (nor the nonpresentability of the thing in general), nor even the fact that it... presents itself to a subject and through a subject (representation), but the fact that it presents itself and as it presents itself: it presents itself in unlimitation, it presents itself always at the limit' (2003, p. 225).

¹¹ While form or contour is limitation in Nancy and this is the concern of the beautiful, the unlimited is the concern of the sublime. He observed, 'the Sublime offering is the limit of presentation, and it takes place on and all along this limit, along the contour of form' (Nancy, 2003, p. 238).

¹² Smithson's extensive library included Bergson's book *Creative Evolution* (Tsai et al., 2004, p. 255). In his lecture at the Dia Foundation in New York, artist Trevor Paglen draws on Bergson to explain that in *The Spiral Jetty* duration can only be known through intuition and images can never be complete, due to the past being dependent on future re-imaginings (Buckingham, 2020, p. 132).

historically significant way of imagining space in the mimetic sense, as equivalent to representation, horizontality, and as a surface, is illustrated by Massey with a quote from Bergson's *Matter and Memory*, 1896, 'you substitute the path for the journey, and because the journey is subtended by the path, you think the two coincide' (Bergson quoted in Massey, 2015, p. 28). Bergson's position 'that through representation we spatialise time' add stasis to time, is 'one of the most complex and definitive ones' (2015, p. 24). In opposition to space thought of as stasis, the artworks discussed in this research accord with Bergson's acknowledgement of duration as external and Ingold's broader discussion in his writing on lines and paths. Ingold explains Deleuze and Guattari's smooth space as a meshwork of paths to elucidate a non-teleological understanding of space.

The concept of smooth space denotes a spatial environment that is unconstrained while striated space refers to a spatiality that is structured (striated) by the patterns of political ideologies. For Ingold, smooth space can be thought of as a mesh or felt, without an organised pattern (2015, p. 80). Ingold explains that for Deleuze and Guattari the topology of smooth space is 'not of lines or paths of movement at all', but of qualities associated with weather. Although the farmer marks the field with a regular pattern associated with striated space, the opposite of smooth space, the farmer follows the seasons and weather in a 'meshwork' sense. Although farming as a collective action can also be seen to follow a regular, seasonal pattern and this can be guided by weather, the farmer as an individual follows a personal path or 'story-so-far' which is continually becoming in Ingold's meshwork smooth space (2015, p. 82). Farming is used as an example, however, Ingold applies meshwork smooth space to any individual in a way that corresponds with Massey's 'stories-so far', where path is dispersed to the relational dimension, thought of as a journey. It presents 'a patchwork of continuous variation, extending without limits in all directions' a conception of space as distinctly dispersed (2015, p. 81).

This leads to the following section and an introduction to the ways in which ideological frames are dispersed. Space as becoming does not correspond with a path's role as a social (ideological) structure. Although in contrast to these artists' works my practice does not document trans-continental pathways, my sites harmonise with the conceptualisations of monumentality that are presented. The works reference the monument in terms of the path. This implies a surface or superficiality, as does my media and my process of walking on paths and videoing, and these come together to imply linearity. However, the ways in which the artworks resist linearity is addressed. Artworks disperse the path, a frame, bringing into view

its relational dimension, and in doing so, interrogate the monument. This research does not explore the monument as an object, or an architectural structure denoted as marker. My practice of walking along paths while documenting presence in the site investigates the site-as-marker in public green spaces in the sense of structural film's principle of reflexivity. The self-interrogative and self-referential attributes of the canonical structural film complicate the construction of meaning by foregrounding the dynamic relationship between maker and subject, so that the maker's method is inscribed into the making of the work. This is shown in the practice in Chapter Four. This approach is supportive of the open-ended and recursive, iterative process of viewing and imagining and the material processes of making are foregrounded. The subject is still there but enmeshed in the process and the viewer is afforded agency in the work. These considerations afford a productive approach and acknowledge the necessarily embedded material practices Massey emphasised (2015).¹³

Structural Film

The term *structural* is used to denote a way of working developed within experimental film with the aim to complicate the construction of meaning and this way resist a consumerism of images, in which meaning is given or assumed. In his analysis, *A history of experimental film and video*, A. L. Rees observed that structural film was concerned with the relation between form and subject matter of a work (2017, p. 87).¹⁴ Catherine Russell tells us in her writing on film in *Experimental Ethnography*, any political effect which is outside of these categories can be thought of as 'impurities' (1999, p. 161). This research investigates strategies of dispersal within specific critical-documentarist experimental film practices that use structural film strategies and how ideological frames ('impurities') are treated in specific works that deny the frame(s) agency.

Metaphor in film

Self-referential strategies present an interpretation of the filmic image implicating viewing and presence, this can be understood along with of the 'submerged cinema' of repetition and sequences characteristic to experimental film (Rees, 2020, p. 23). In relation to this, I acknowledge Deleuze and Guattari's theory of the diagram derived from C. S. Peirce's notions of semiology (Rees, 2020, p. 23). In this research it is combined with more contemporary

¹³In his discussion on the photographic image, Victor Burgin links the daydream's recursive process to thinking otherwise, an open-ended way of thinking that is 'fundamental' to a true democracy (2020, 138) (C.1).

¹⁴P. Adam Sitney's notion of an overriding structure, as a way of decoupling form and content in order to bring the latter into question, manifests in the practice through the movement of walking that structures the image. This is discussed in the following sections.

understandings of affect, imagination, and the daydream drawing on Massey, Burgin, Rees and others.¹⁵

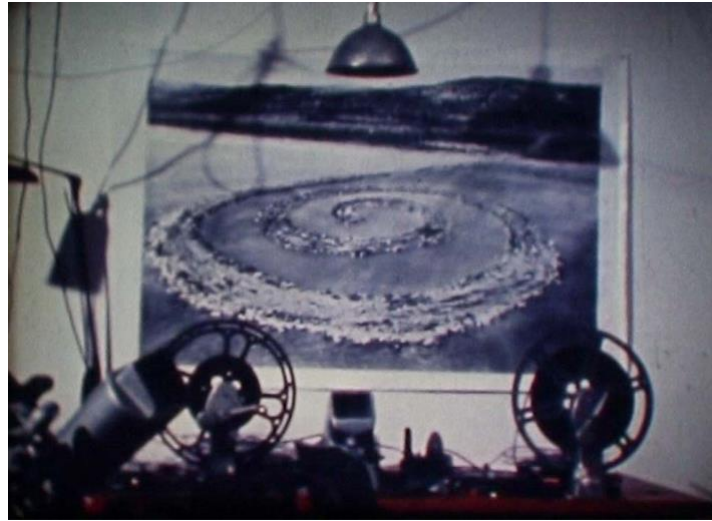


Figure 1. Digital still from *The Spiral Jetty* film (1972) by Robert Smithson showing the photograph, spiral structure, and reels of film.

The path metaphor Robert Smithson explored in his film can be understood in the sense of a drawing and is linked to the 'submerged cinema' of repetition and sequences that is an attribute of experimental film (Rees, 2020, p. 23).¹⁶ In *The Spiral Jetty* film, he walks and runs on the jetty path. A film is a spiral (in its reel) and Smithson's movements, walking and running, when considered in terms of a drawing can be understood as marking frames.¹⁷ During her talk at Dia Centre for the Arts, New York in 2002, artist Diana Thater explained there are two drawings of the film with the jetty structure as a path. The first is where close aerial views result in footage within which the structure falls through the image frame in sections, the helicopter following along the jetty path. The second is the view of Smithson as he moved along the structure (Buckingham, 2002, p.180). There are more drawings of the film in this multiple artwork supported by Smithson's writing in *The Spiral Jetty* text where he explored an association of spiraling ideas (Flam, 1996, p. 148).

The final scene in *The Spiral Jetty* film is in the cutting room and comprises a thirty second view of a black and white photograph of the jetty structure pinned above spiral reels of film, and here

¹⁵ The diagram's function is close to the imagination (or a schema) in Kant shown in Arendt as a movement.

¹⁶ Peter Gidal theorises on repetition and obfuscation as a refusal of representation in his writing on film practice and materialism in film (C.2).

¹⁷ *The Spiral Jetty* film is within the traditions and parameters of landscape-based experimental and documentary film practice and Smithson himself observed a 'film is a spiral made up of frames' (Flam, 1996, p. 148). Used this way the term frame denotes the still images that comprise a film, for example, the 24 frames per second that make up a 16 mm film.

he acknowledged and even foregrounded the relationship between the jetty structure and the film. In this scene Smithson extended the metaphor of path to his experimental film acknowledging the film as a path. Questions to do with the nature of destination (a characteristic of path explained earlier) and thinking (the path of thought) were clearly of interest to Smithson. These areas were explored in this multiple artwork, and in his subsequent writings on Central Park in the context of the picturesque landscape (Flam, 1996)¹⁸. The notion of the picturesque and Margaret Atwood's analysis, is taken up again following a discussion on broad or narrowcasting and positioning (communication). In this research Smithson's role shifts to one of theorist, and it is interesting to note here that Massey's notion of space/time, made up of multiplicities harmonises with his investigation. *The Spiral Jetty* film presents an interpretation of actuality as unfinished, as trajectories (C.3.1).¹⁹

The background landscape

As an artist long based in London and Toronto, my practice attends to the dispersed nature of space and landscape, as a product of the social and the ways in which this can be documented in moving image artworks. This research attends to a shift in associations, leading to new ideas elsewhere. The position is not intentionally nationalistic or feminist. Art, in part, attempts to bring into view that which is unknown and, therefore, unthinkable, as fundamentally different to that which we perceive we know in the world.²⁰ Structural film aims to do so by using strategies that interrupt the production of meaning by examining its own material production and its processes, to bring into view the ways in which meaning can be constructed in film and resist representation. This way of working is agential in the sense that it affords the viewer an informed position to critically engage with the work. This is exemplified in specific sequences in *The Spiral Jetty* film where Smithson's investigation of the metaphor brings the image into a relationship with the material of the site. In the sections documenting the drive to and from his site the image takes on some of the aspects of the canonical structural film, in that here the structure is imposing in the sense that it structures the experience. In these sections the frame(s) is brought into view and dispersed affording the viewer agency, and this is a key to the film. In this experimental film and in his multiple artworks more generally, Smithson works against the frame (C.3).

¹⁸ Smithson argued against Hegel as ideational, and for a materialist understanding of the beautiful and sublime landscape, which he extended to the picturesque. Landscape artists 'Price and Gilpin provide a synthesis with their formulation of the "picturesque" which is...related to chance and change in the material order of nature' (Flam, 1996, p. 159).

¹⁹ Derived from George Kubler's theories in *The Shape of Time*, 1962.

²⁰ Exemplified in the discussion in Rancière where he calls for an aesthetic economy (one that is not representable or distributed) (Thomas Wall, 1999, p. 15).

Narrowcasting and Broadcasting

The works discussed in this research are within critical-documentarist art practice and experimental film and in parts, draw on the self-interrogative, self-referential strategies found in structural film. Chapter Three is on the ways the final forms in these works are complicated. The viewer completes the work, as is much discussed in conceptual art (Duchamp, *The Creative Act*, 1975). My practice, discussed in Chapter Four, used structural film strategies, including a quasi-mechanical process of walking, and the image draws attention to itself as unstable. In the sense that the viewer becomes aware of the explicitly imposed structure they can respond to my videos as structured images. The camera's movement on or along a path, denoted by the movement of a layer of water in its container, is an overarching structure shown in the upwards view images. Presence is linked to the dispersed surface plane of the resultant image. In the upwards view walking videos, the walking movement is what defines the form of the work. In this sense the video practice prioritises the overarching structure subsuming the content. The overarching procedure (structure) strongly determines the eventual 'content' (that is produced by the overarching structure). The resultant videos are self-interrogative, self-referential, affording the recursive process of viewing and imagining that is an attribute of structural film (C.4.1).

The landscape, in its role as a structured place, was brought into view for me when my family moved from Toronto, a city in the middle of a continent, to a rural island in the Caribbean Sea. Mixed in with my astonishment at the clichéd truth of the velvety heat of the scented tropical air, was my awareness of the unfamiliar design of street lighting. The systems associated with art and design media lead to interpretations of the landscape as orderly, suggesting an inherent stability (Whiteread, 1995). Although I was young, this move away from a place I understood as my world brought into view for me the constructedness of my reality. My understanding of television also changed and what had been for me a form of entertainment became a path for communication. My mother's informational puppet show was broadcast daily. The puppets could be found in the opening time slot of this island's TV channel, which broadcast after school hours. This animation included its context as it was shown where it was made, and this was something the other animations were not able to do. In contrast with this experience of the image as a productive space, later my school selected me and other girls to play the pirates for a commercial promoting Captain Bird's Eye ready-made food for children, which was also broadcast in the UK. These experiences highlighted the role of the landscape (used as a frame) within the potential of moving image.

The practice documents specific sites in the landscape and the tension arising from the discord between actuality and technology's material and virtual manifestations is discussed in this research (C.2.2). This way the practice questions communication, and there is a critical engagement with communication in the public space (C.2.2). This is discussed in Chapter Two and in the writing on the practice in Chapter Four. In the practice the videos are informative, however they are not communicative in the way that broadcasting may be expected to communicate. This is exemplified by the video *we all look at the same sky*, Chapter Four, Part 1. This video documents my first site, Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park, London. The material site is supportive of a form of narrowcasting, affording bottom-up communication in that individuals share ideas directly to small audiences who may heckle.²¹ Although mediated, the practice affords an exchange in the sense of narrowcasting. However, in the practice, communication is complicated. There is a frustration of communication, a refusal of it that is seemingly in contrast to the communication that this site affords to individuals when they are speaking. However, the landscape in its actuality is acknowledged in the experience of material and process, durations and affects. The way in which the body is positioned in the landscape is affective and of the moment and this site exists in the affective tension between individuality and sociability that Massey emphasised (2015, p. 188). Distance is acknowledged rather than produced, in the sense that the subjective view is somehow the destination and the site affords agency to the individual. The abstract and material position(s) Speaker's take (in thought and actuality) are played out on a section of the path and they complicate the final form in this site. The destination in this site becomes unavailable insofar as it is always being made, and this is an attribute of this site, and the landscape more generally, and one that my practice aimed to acknowledge (C. 4).

While this research progresses from (but does not include) an explorative artwork using a smartphone app as art medium, explained in Chapter Two, this artwork was an exploration into documenting the landscape using strategies found in Correspondence Art.

Correspondence Art strategies were used in the works closely read in this research and in the practices of the artists more generally (C.2.2). Correspondence Art influenced the developing internet, however, the current developments and debates in communication research in the areas of virtuality and the possibilities AI brings to virtual landscapes online for example, is

²¹ In contrast artificial intelligence, AI, is top-down communication.

outside the scope of this research. This research is an investigation into the language of film and what is being said in specific moving image works.



Figure 2. Digital still from *La raison avant la passion / Reason over Passion* (1969) by Joyce Wieland showing Frampton's anagrams.

The picturesque landscape

Margaret Atwood's analysis of poetic forms in her book *Survival* first published in 1972, is an early influence in my practice. Atwood tells us the landscape is conceptualised within the larger context of the wilderness (sublime) in Canada (2012). Bruce Elder in his paper *Joyce Wieland and the Canadian Experimental Cinema*, published in the book, *The films of Joyce Wieland* (1999), attributes this way of working to Wieland amongst others including Michael Snow (K. Elder, 1999, p. 67-68). As an artist filmmaker Wieland worked within post-Dadaism in opposition to the '1950s institutionalisation of modern art' (Rees, 2017, p. 67). For her, Dadaist artworks '...are artistic in a *general* way ... they see things whole. Their jokes are about life' (Lippard quoted in Wieland, 1987, p. 1-2). Wieland brought her understanding of the landscape to a new way of working in film. She was based in New York from the mid-1960s until returning to Toronto in the early 1970s. Although *La raison avant la passion* was denied a place in the Anthology Film Archive's pantheon in 1969, her works are now associated with the New York group (Wieland, 1987, p. 5).²² As B. Elder observed, the image frame is shown to be a 'transitional device' in Wieland's work more generally. It 'serves a diacritical function' and therefore, does not denote a space that is bounded (K. Elder, 1999, p. 67) (C.2.3). Smithson, Wieland and Calle, worked within the picturesque in this sense, and in their works the image frame is processual.

²² Hollis Frampton contributed the anagrams to this film.

Thesis Structure

Chapter One introduced ideas and contexts that are elucidated in the following Chapters. To this end, Chapter Two starts with a section on structural film and materialism in film and considers ideas put forward by Le Grice, Gidal, Rees, Snow, Brakhage and others (C.2.1). The discussion on ideologies and the art practices that follow elucidate the contexts for the works analysed in Chapter Three. The progression in post-modernity from offline to online Correspondence Art is discussed (C.2.2). The third section on landscape as picturesque progresses from Kant and Burke and draws on Atwood's analysis of poetic forms in literature, and Smithson's writing on the American picturesque in 1973 and on New York's Central Park (C.2.3).



Figure 3. Digital video still from *Double Blind / No Sex Last Night* (1996) by Sophie Calle showing the frame. The small unredacted section shows a road centre line marking.

Chapter Three is on three moving image works. Robert Smithson's *The Spiral Jetty* film (1972) is treated as an explorative presentation of his theory of non-site. Ideas put forward by Smithson, Ingold, Roberts, and others are discussed in relation to this experimental film, and its final forms (C.3.1). Joyce Wieland's film, *La raison avant la passion / Reason over Passion* (1969) is next considered. Contrasting formulations of structural film by Russell and others are examined in relation to Wieland's film, which is treated as an example of a structural film with explicit political context and therefore an example of 'impure' structural film (C.3.2). A discussion on Sophie Calle's video, *Double Blind / No Sex Last Night* (1996) follows. In this section formulations of diarism by Russell, Akerman

and others are examined in relation to Calle's investigation of the daydream. Her experimental video is considered as an example of an encounter between the cinematic experience and structural film (C.3.3). In Chapter Four the discussion is on the practice-based research and the approach taken in three video works (C.4). Chapter Five is the concluding Chapter, and the research contribution to new knowledge is elucidated and next steps for this research are outlined.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two starts with structural film and materialism in film and considers ideas put forward by Le Grice, Gidal, Rees, and others (C.2.1). The discussion on ideologies and the art practices that follow are in a progression from Benjamin's notion of film as a dispersive medium (C.2.2). The notion of the picturesque landscape is next elucidated. To do so, Atwood's analysis of poetic themes in literature and Smithson's writing on the American picturesque are introduced (C.2.3).

2. 1 Structural Materialism

Representation requires mimicry and therefore acceptability, such as that found in the quality of an image through which is shown an acceptable, inherent political structure.²³ Structural materialism in film practice shows the other side of materiality to bring into view its unstable nature. It reaches out beyond concepts to the potential meanings and contexts of material forms, implying the activity of the imagination in Kant. The discussion in this Chapter begins with the approach taken by filmmaker theoreticians Malcolm Le Grice and Peter Gidal shown by Gidal in his paper *Problems 'relating to' Warhol's 'Still Life 1976'* where he refers to Andy Warhol's treatment of a photographic image (2016, p. 79 – 88). One strand of experimental film can be thought of as a progression from Warhol's early films and it is useful here to consider Gidal's writing on Warhol's approach using still photography.²⁴ The final scenes in each of the three works analysed in Chapter Three, include views of a photographic object, and photographs are included in the practice (C.4).²⁵ Warhol's silkscreened photograph of a section of hammer and sickle are in part painted over and under, and in this way changed from a photographic object.

This antagonism, this contradiction, propels thought through the workings of the mechanisms which (this) painting, this image, is. Thus it is placed, and we are placed, inside a materialist procedure that disallows the simple apprehension / consumption of the meanings of one set of images (this specific painting) as if they were covered, cohesive, and closed by another (imaginary set of images) – the referents in the 'world' (2016, p. 82).

²³ Rancière's aesthetic principal speaks against it. In his proposed aesthetic regime, the structures of the representative regime are dispersed, including those structures which refer to the modes of expression in art and to the genres of art practice (Rancière, 2009).

²⁴ Denoted structural materialism by Gidal in 1976 (Rees, 2017, p. 89). P. Adams Sitney first introduced the term structural to denote a way of working in film in 1969 and it was 'institutionalized' in 1974 in his book *Visionary Film*. This was taken up, with the addition of the term materialism by Gidal in his book *Structural Film Anthology* in 1976 and Le Grice's writing on this approach in *Abstract Film and Beyond* published in 1977 (Russell, 1999, p. 158).

²⁵ The sense of duration and materialism found in Warhol's early practice caught the attention of experimental filmmakers in London (Rees, 2017, p. 75).

The process Gidal outlined results in an 'anti-documentary tension' (2016, p. 82).²⁶ While the tradition of documentary practice includes narrative works, Warhol's painting resists linearity in the sense that it complicated the notion of a final form (2016, p. 84).

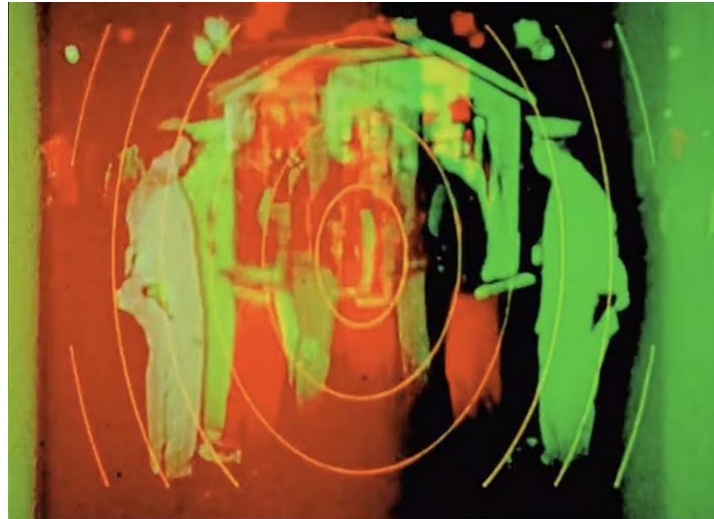


Figure 4. A digital still of *Threshold* (1972) by Malcolm Le Grice showing the target shaped effect and armed guards.

Le Grice's documentary images, *Castle 1* (1966) and *Threshold* (1972) exemplify his approach to film practice in the 60's and early 70's (Rees, 2020, p. 33-34). In the former, Le Grice included footage of a politician, Barbara Castle, at a conference. A flashing light bulb refers to both the filmic medium and the real in the world. It acts as an interruption, where each flash of the light reminds the viewer of their material relation to the image.²⁷ In this work he also used montage, described in Rees as 'metric and anti-narrative', and images of castles (visual puns) to complicate the final form (2020, p. 33). *Threshold*, a three-projector installation work, made six years later, builds on the playful use of light and anti-narrative montage of *Castle 1* (1966). The work is presented in an experience of a performative repositioning of three projected images that overlap and diverge. The projectors are rearranged during the viewing. Three similar views of armed custom officials are repositioned in a very material way relative to each other and to the viewer.²⁸ To make sense of the work the viewer is required to reassess their own position in relation to the image and the material world. This work includes an early computer-generated

²⁶ Antagonism in philosophy indicates a disagreement, different positions that can be indicative of a continuing struggle, which is potentially productive. Contradiction is indicative of a ratio (is and is not) and can refer to Marxist dialectics in Gidal.

²⁷ This suggests something Deleuze writes about in his exploration of concepts and the temporal dimension and, in a progression, his critique of identity (Braidotti et al., 2012) This thread is taken up in Chapters Three and Four.

²⁸ This is a movement somehow akin to 'castle' in chess where there is an exchange of position. In the practice, the thinking is on montage as a movement, a lifting up that is a synthesis (C.4). The repositioning of images in this work connects with montage as a raising up.

optical effect made Le Grice on a military computer and the abstract target shaped effect keeps the use of computers in their role as a military aid in view (2020, p. 34). These two works by Le Grice are self-referential and remind the viewer of the illusory quality of the image in so far as they refer to the material, processes and apparatus of film and video making.²⁹

Le Grice's later practice encompassed narrative with his trilogy; *Emily – third party speculation* (1977), *Blackbird Descending* (1979) and *Finnegan's Chin* (1981). He asked, 'if all aspects of narrative are irrevocably embroiled with the social function that it has come to serve?' (Le Grice quoted in Rees, 2017, p. 90). This question is taken up by Hollis Frampton in his later works (Rees, 2017, p. 90). Art practice is mutable as Frampton explains in a letter to Gidal.

I said to Sitney, at dinner in July: I have found your Structuralists, P. Adams, and they are in England. Complete to the diacritical mark, influence of Warhol, the whole number. You see, Peter, most of us to whom that tag has been stuck, are a little (or more than a little) exercised about it. & if some of the foregoing seems suspended near the point of irritation, it has to do with feeling myself condemned for nonconformity to a set of Laws that were extrapolated from work that I myself (among others) did in the first place (Gidal, 1976, p. 77).

Frampton further explained, '...The new work is made, as all the other stuff has been, according to my possibly imperfect understanding of the classic canons and root necessities of my art ...' (Frampton quoted in Gidal, 1976, p. 77).³⁰

Frampton's interrogation of film practice, shown in his comment on Warhol's works as diacritical, and his views on his own practice more generally, were drawn on in this research. Practice is positioned as theory to deliver cognitive content in a similar manner as theory expressed using other forms. Attention in this research is on what is being said and how to say it in moving image works, and to afford authority to the artists. This approach is shown within film practice in *Film Talks* a book form collection of discussions and an accompanying programme of events in London, bringing artists' foundational ideas into current contexts (Simon Payne et al., 2021).

Monument and path as a frame

The artworks analysed in Chapter Three use approaches and materialisms that accord with

²⁹Significantly, these images question the role of the gaze, and they operate 'as experiments in seeing' (Russell, 1999, p. 157 to 158). In this sense structural film may seem to parallel apparatus theory. However, gaze theory is a more productive approach that encompasses video and still photography and other media where the gaze can be thought of 'as a site of power and resistance' (Russell, 1999, p. 121).

³⁰ Frampton contributed computer-generated anagrams of Pierre Trudeau's motto to Wieland's film; his role was one of technician (K. Elder, 1999, p. 176). The anagrams keep the surface plane of the image in view. His irregularly spaced tones that accompany the anagrams contribute to keeping the illusory quality of the filmic image in view in a way similar to the flashing light in Le Grice's earlier work, *Threshold* (1966).

structural film's enquiry into its own material production, as Le Grice and Gidal theorised, and produce durational works. While the narrative form is referenced in their works, they refer to the material path as the duration of moving through an actual landscape (Massey's stories-so-far). The final forms are complicated in this sense.³¹ In accord with the works discussed in this research, the practice explored the monument as a frame. The artworks document the path to interrogate the monument. They disperse the path, a frame, and work with a form of anti-monument considering the prefix 'anti', in a similar way to a literary 'anti-hero' to connote a questioning or alternative form derived from the way monuments (as structures) are understood.³² This research developed a practice-based definition of the monument in a progression from Henri Lefebvre's proposal that monuments extend a conception of the world to their surroundings (2011, p. 143). These works can be said to play on 'the logic of the monument' while still fulfilling the criteria Rosalind Krauss developed in 1979.³³ While 'the logic of sculpture and the logic of the monument' are not separable, a monument forms a 'marker at a particular place for a specific meaning/event'. It 'sits in a particular place and speaks in a symbolical tongue about the meaning or use of that place' (Kraus, 1979, p. 33). However, this research is not exploring the monument as an object, or an architectural structure denoted as marker. The practice documented presence in accord with structural film's interrogation into its own production in an investigation of the site-as-marker in public green spaces (C.4).

The works discussed in Chapter Three are investigative of space in the sense that they document presence in a material definition of the social, as affective in Massey (C.1). They move through or in the landscape and this plays out in different ways. The earliest of the three works discussed in this research, *La raison avant la passion* (1969) draws a horizontal line moving along a trans-continental roadway and railway. Wieland's film takes a chiasitic form and positions organised politics at its (actual) centre. The centre is occupied by footage of Pierre Elliot Trudeau and the foregrounding of his motto (in the form of Frampton's computer-generated anagrams and tones) inscribes a condition of monumentality on this politician. While his motto is an ideology extended to the landscape (the nation-state) and denotes the social, the accompanying tone reaches out to the viewer as an interruption in the manner of Le Grice's light

³¹ Duration is a form in film and structural film was 'concerned with the relation between the form and its subject-matter' (Rees, 2017, p. 87).

³² The monument in its role as a questioning form is suggestive of the critique of the concept in Deleuze where identity is shown to be mutable. As an example, the artist is present in *The Spiral Jetty* film and the viewer is shown a position in relation to the marker and the material landscape. This way identity is brought into view in a relationship with materiality (C.3.1).

³³ The definition of 'anti' monument in this research is derived from Rosalind Krauss' early discussion on the monument in *Sculpture in the Expanded Field*, published in October Magazine in 1979.

bulb in *Castle 1* (1966). It supports the durational re-recorded footage, made up of close views of this politician. There is an acknowledgement of the individual, although mediated presence is denoted in a material way. The re-recorded footage is affective and material in the sense of Warhol's work, and corporeality is brought into view.

Smithson started work on his spiral structure the year following the completion of Wieland's film. Smithson's multiple artwork reaches out to the infinitely large and small, and it likewise encompasses a nation-state. It expands and contracts in its site like breathing and is positioned in a very material way in the centre of the chiasmic form offered by the actual east and west sections of the trans-continental railway.³⁴ While this is a documentary film in that it documents a site in the landscape and the construction of a Land Art work, the materiality of landscape and corporeality, theorised as space/time in Massey, are also documented. This is exemplified in the film's introductory section where, in an investigation of cartography's fundamentals, sounds denote different temporalities and tide-based functionality. The demand valve is heard, then the metronome, clock, radiation counter, and Smithson's voice reading. The sound that is first heard, machine-assisted breathing, links the film to scientific exploration and spaces where unassisted breathing is not available (underground caves, underwater, above the breathable atmosphere) and to vulnerability and corporeality.³⁵

Working later in the 1990's, Calle shows a further progression to subjectification in her experimental video. Calle takes an oblique approach, and a second filmmaker is included. The narrative form is complicated by a diaristic presentation, and structural film strategies are used to specifically denote the video's chiasmic form. While both voices are heard narrating, the monument in the form of a material structure and an ideology is introduced by Calle as the destination in this work. The monument is a frame in the work in the sense that the ideology it extends is a social structure (a path). However, the daydream (the journey) is instead shown to be her destination. The fixed frame view is used in this image to mark Calle's practice constraints, also a frame in this work, denoted by the extended frame that redacts the image during the introductory and concluding sections. The narrated section explains her constraints and while doing so it also shows the chiasmic structure of the work to the viewer.

³⁴ Smithson started work on his spiral structure in 1970. His site is near the railway embankment that crosses the Great Salt Lake and bypasses the original meeting place of east and west sections of track. There are a few meters of track that mark the nearby original site at the Golden Spike Monument, a monument to Frontierism (C.2.3)

³⁵ As highlighted by the Covid-19 pandemic when there was an initial shortage of ventilator machines some of which use a demand valve.

Metaphor of path

The path is a frame in these works and it is interesting here to consider the path that is shown in the work of Michael Snow, who also worked within the group of experimental filmmakers in New York in the 60s and 70s. Snow's structural film practice investigated the image in relation to its content, an analysis of the paradoxes generated by the relationship between the image and actuality (the thing the image is of). This is shown in the contrast between *Wavelength* (1967) and *Breakfast: Table-top Dolly* (1976). *Wavelength* is an extended zoom squashing and flattening the visual space, in a virtual forward movement.³⁶ In this image, the narrative form is complicated and *Wavelength's* path ends in a view of a still image of a seascape. This is a possible reference to the national motto, *From Sea to Sea*, that Wieland referred to in her flag shaped film. Snow's image dissolves in a defocusing of this image, returning the viewer to the light play of what the viewer has been watching all along.



Figure 5. A digital still from *Wavelength* (1967) by Michael Snow showing the final zoomed image of a seascape photograph pinned to the wall.

While Snow documented the virtual in terms of a path in *Wavelength*, an actual path is shown in *Breakfast*. Here he documented a movement forward along a path in a material way as the camera physically moves forward on a table dispersing the objects in its path. The camera by actually moving in on its subject, squashes and flattens the food. Here the camera's path is also without end. It simply gets stuck at a certain point and can go no further. A physical distance is measured in terms of the material; the breakfast is the path in a very material sense. The viewer imagines the real in the world in the sense of the objects, the individual and collective qualities of a meal, and its preparation and consumption. The temporal dimension is alluded to in the title,

³⁶ 1967 is the year of the Centennial celebration in Canada that Wieland also documented.

the end of a fast, the periodic repetition of a meal, and the durations of making and consuming in relation to subjective experience, or *story-so-far* (Massey) brought into play. This image is self-interrogative in the sense that it is a metaphor for the film itself. It alludes to the processes involved as well as the materials. The image refers to the filmic narrative path and its material path, the strip of celluloid. It is suggestive of the flattening of objects by the medium, in the sense that they are shown as images in a two-dimensional illusionistic play of light, and the consumption of the filmic image by the viewer.



Figure 6. A digital still showing *The Text of Light* (1974) by Stan Brakhage where light is caught in a plane in the image.

Stan Brakhage investigated light while using water in his experimental film practice and exemplified the ways in which the image can include an examination of film (its self-referential quality). Speaking on his own practice, artist filmmaker Nicky Hamlyn observed, 'all films are documentaries on some level' (Payne et al., 2021). In his book on artists' film, *Film Art Phenomenon*, Hamlyn explained Brakhage worked against perspective, 'destabilising the field of observation through overexposing, defocusing, turning the camera upside down, inserting flash frames, negative sections, superimpositions and so on' (2009, p. 90). While in his earlier work *The Text of Light* (1974) Brakhage used cut glass to bring a process of refraction into view, dispersing light, in a subsequent film *Commingle Containers* (1996) Brakhage dispersed light and the filmic image using movement and water as a refractive medium. He brought light into view with glass containers that refract light under water, and filming while submerging the lens of a Bolex camera (a camera not usually used this way). In this image, dark water backgrounds the resultant bright, colourful shapes. The image presents light and water in contexts that are not usually seen in film, foregrounding light with a background of water, in this way reversing the more usual role of these elements and bringing unusual visual material, qualities of light and

water, into view. There is much more to these films by Brakhage but they can be understood as images that present light as a filmic material and this way document their own production, in accord with materialism in film.

Video paths

The practice approach is one where the landscape is documented while a structure is imposed in a material way using water to disperse light.³⁷ It is one of interruption, a form of errancy and presents inadequate representations of the landscape. Path is investigated as the material landscape and as a frame. As an example, in Chapter Four, Part 2 these dimensions can be found in the contrast between the upward views offered by the immersible camera.³⁸ The camera's position under a layer of water in a container and the walking path that it documented is shown on the surface plane of the image, and this is interrupted by the perspective view of the landscape, which is also complicated.³⁹ The quality of materiality is shown in the dispersed form

³⁷ Self-referential strategies present an interpretation of the filmic image that refer to the process of drawing (C.1, p.xx).

³⁸ This suggests something that Russell writes about Chantal Akerman's work, where 'Akerman's imagery is the essence of the banal, the mundane, and the ordinary, which makes the framing itself an event' (Russell, 1999, p. 165).

³⁹ The image presents a collage of layers to the viewer that is shown as a movement, as an example, the walking path is documented on the surface plane of the image in a way akin to the method of drawing using frottage (C.4). In the practice, the thinking is on montage as a movement, a lifting up in the sense of a synthesis, sublation. Montage is used in all the works discussed in Chapter Three and the definition of sublation in *The Hegel Dictionary* is useful here and indicative of the thread that leads to the next steps of this research (C.5).

sublation The verb *heben* is related to 'heave' and originally meant 'to seize, grasp', but now means 'to lift, raise: to remove (especially an adversary from his saddle, hence) to supplant him; to remove (e.g. a difficulty, a contradiction)' It enters many compounds, the most significant for Hegel being *aufheben* ('to sublate'). *Aufheben* has three main senses:

1. 'to raise, to hold, lift up'.
2. 'to annul. abolish. destroy. cancel, suspend'
3. 'to keep, save, preserve'.

The reflexive, *sich aufheben*, now has reciprocal force, when numbers or items in an account 'cancel' or 'balance each other', but it was used more widely in Hegel's day. e.g. for someone 'getting up' from his seat. and is used by Hegel for something's sublating *itself*. The noun *Aufhebung* similarly means (1) 'raising up'; (2) 'abolition'; and (3) 'preserving'. (The nominal infinitive, *Aufheben*, occurs in the expression *Aufheben(s) machen* 'to make a fuss?'.)

Usually *aufheben* is used in only one of these senses on a given occasion. Schiller mostly uses it in sense (2) but in AB. XVIII, he comes close to combining all three senses. when he argues that Beauty 'combines the two opposed states [viz. of FEELING (*Empfinden*) and THINKING] and thus sublates the opposition'. But sense (2) predominates since he adds that 'both states disappear entirely in a third and no trace of the division remains in the whole that they form'. (Cf. *Aufhebung* in AE, XXIV.) Hegel regularly uses *aufheben* in all three senses at once and Schiller, even when he does not use *aufheben*, influenced his usage. Thus Schiller anticipates Hegel's view of the sublation of Nature: [Man] does not stop short at what mere nature made of him: he has the capacity to retrace by REASON the steps she took on his behalf to transform the work of compulsion into a work of his free choice and to elevate Physical NECESSITY to moral necessity' (AE, III).

A similar ambiguity occurs in the Latin *tollere* which means (1) 'to raise up' and (2) 'to take up from its place, i.e. to destroy, remove'. Thus, when Cicero said that Octavians was *tollendus* ('to be raised up'), he meant both that he was to be elevated and that he was to be got rid of. The past participle of *tollere* is *sublatus* and this gave rise to the English verb 'to sublate'. This originally to remove take away but is now obsolete in this sense. It was used by Sir William Hamilton for 'to deny, contradict. disaffirm (a proposition)'. in contrast to 'to POSIT. It was then used by Stirling in *The Secret of Hegel* (1865), in the sense of both

of the videos as they document presence. In the practice as the upwards view image moves through the landscape the viewer is required to reconsider their position in relation to the image and the real in the world. In this sense the work affords the viewer agency to critically engage with the political content of the work.

2.2 Ideologies and art practice

The artworks discussed in this research use dispersive strategies including those found in structural film and materialism in film, to present open-ended understandings of the landscape. The path is shown in its role as a social structure that organises groups of people and influences decision-making, however the destination of the path is not reached and is shown to be unavailable. The sense of destination inherent to the path is a quality that it shares with a narrative work insofar as a conclusion can be understood in terms of a destination and this is a

'destroy' and 'preserve' for Hegel's *aufheben*. The defects of 'sublate' as a rendering of *aufheben* are that *tollere*, as Hegel points out, does not have sense (3), to keep, etc. and that it is not a familiar English word. Thus translators have also used 'supersede', 'abolish', 'cancel', 'sublimate' (Kaufmann), etc. Its closest English counterpart, 'to kick upstairs', is too colloquial to win general approval.

In his explicit accounts of *aufheben*, Hegel refers only to senses (2) and (3), since it is, on his view, of great interest to SPECULATIVE thought that *aufheben* has opposite senses. Both senses, he argues, are implicit in (3), since to preserve something involves removing it from its IMMEDIACY and from its exposure to external influences. There are, he says, several such words in German. He mentions no others in his accounts of *aufheben* e. g. Enc. I §96A.), but he has in mind such words as Person (PERSON), 'SUBJECTIVITY', and *Begriff* (CONCEPT), which is associated both with the beginnings of a thing and with its climax. Many English words and phrases have opposite senses: e.g. 'to cleave (to)' (which is etymologically two distinct words), 'to betray (e.g. one's origins)', 'to dispose (of)', 'to go downhill', and 'mirror image'. This has no general philosophical significance.

When a word has two or more senses, Hegel does not invariably give equal weight to each of its senses on all (or most) occasions of its use. *Aufhebung* responds more fruitfully to this treatment than most other words. But (1) even when one of a word's senses is dominant in Hegel's use, its other senses are usually also in play, i.e. sublated, but not wholly suppressed, and (2) he tends to connect systematically the different senses of, e.g. 'REFLECTION' and 'JUDGEMENT'.

Hegel associates *aufheben* with several other words: Thus when something is sublated (*aufgehoben(e)*), it is IDEAL (*ideell*), MEDIATED (or 'reflected'), in contrast to immediate, and a MOMENT of a WHOLE that also contains its opposite. *Aufhebung* is similar to the determinate NEGATION that has a positive result. What results from the sublation of something, e.g. the whole in which both it and its opposite survive as moments is invariably higher than, or the truth of, the item(s) sublated. Thus despite Hegel's silence on the matter, it is reasonable to see sense (1), 'elevation' as an ingredient in its Hegelian meaning.

Like many other Hegelian terms, *Aufhebung* applies both to concepts and to things. The concepts of BEING and NOTHING are sublated in DETERMINATE BEING, and in general lower DETERMINATIONS in the Logic are sublated into higher ones. Earlier stages of a temporal, DEVELOPMENTAL, process are sublated in (to) later stages: e.g. earlier philosophies are both destroyed and preserved in Hegel's philosophy. (One's early beliefs we might say, are sublated in one's later, more measured beliefs or one's early drafts in one's final draft.) The sublation of a concept in the Logic is compatible with its availability for application to lower types of entity: e.g. MECHANISM is sublated in TELEOLOGY but it remains applicable to the solar system. But the sublated phases of a temporal process are not usually retrievable in an analogous way.

Hegel often conflates the logical sublation of a concept with the physical sublation of a thing. For example DEATH is 'the sublation [*das Aufheben*] of the individual animal and hence the emergence of the genus, of SPIRIT' (Enc. II 8376A.). Death physically sublates the individual animal, but the result of this is not the next stage in the physical process, viz. a corpse, but the next stage in the logical process, the genus and, indirectly, spirit. The reasons for such conflation are that (1) sublation proceeds from the lower to the higher, not from, e.g., an animal to a corpse; and (2) Hegel sees a deep connection between the development of concepts and the development of things, which is essential to his IDEALISM (Michael Inwood, 1992, p. 283-285).

final form. Renaissance perspective has an inherent political structure that refers to the social structures (ideologies) of that time. The focus that is afforded by a perspective view is in this sense a destination.⁴⁰ David Harvey, theorising on Postmodernity in spatial terms, observed that Modernity like the Renaissance imposed a structuring ideology (2017, p. 305). Fredrick Jameson described space as ungraspable in the sense that Modernity's structures were dispersed during Postmodernity, a view supported by Massey (2015, p. 100). Without the structuring ideology that Modernity supplied, we have 'the messiness of a dispersed existence' (Jameson quoted in Massey, 2015, p. 79). This research, while investigating the ways in which strategies of dispersal are productively used to document the landscape, benefits from the experience of artists who developed a way of working in dispersed terms during this time and documented the landscape in film. This thread is taken up in the following section 2.3 The Picturesque landscape.

The practice uses an upwards view, and an experience of verticality documents the horizontal dimension; horizontality is associated with Postmodernity. However, the 'horizontal view, collage, and superposition, once celebrated have become obstacles' (John Rajchman quoted in Massey, 2015, p. 51). Massey's point is taken up in the discussion on *The Spiral Jetty* multiple artwork (C.3.1). As a questioning form, it presents an understanding of space/time as the recognition of becoming that is '...within continuous and multiple processes of emergence' (2015, p. 53-54).⁴¹ Smithson used a playful way of working to bring into view the vertical dimension using inversions (word and image puns), to disperse meanings to subjectivity.⁴² His multiple artwork disperses structures to the production of meaning in the way that Derrida's conceptual structure of space/spacing is iterative and productive. This is key, and in Smithson structures are dispersed to subjectivity in a positive and playful way.⁴³ In contrast, collage is a strategy used in Correspondence Art and collage is discussed in terms of a closure in Massey.

⁴⁰ Smithson was a theorist in perspective (Roberts, 2004, p. 75-76). He takes a position against it in his practice and writing more generally. For Smithson Renaissance perspective is a way of understanding space that is in accord with the social structures (ideologies) of that time (Roberts, 2004, p. 75, 79).

⁴¹ An emergence from inside to outside, a coming into being, showing schematism as emergence. In his discussion on the sublime, becoming is presentation in Nancy (2003, p. 234) (C.4).

⁴² There is a concern in Massey about the direction of Derrida's argument in 'the association between text/writing and space' and text's horizontality. Bergson, in accord with Massey, points out that, 'language, which is in distinct parts, misleads us to ascribe its own structure onto the world' (Bergson cited in Rees, 2017, p. 23). As a post-structural theorist Derrida repurposed existing concepts to effect a transformation (of a theoretical structure). However, for Massey 'dislocation of structures' is a phrase that is often understood as 'the dislocation of space by time' and she emphasised that the implied preconception that space is static is an obstacle (2015, p. 54). Another concern is the language of negativity this necessitates, exemplified by 'disruption, dislocation, decomposition' amongst other such terms (2015, p. 53). In Massey deconstruction cannot by itself lead to an imagination of the spatial as space/time described in terms of positivity and coexisting multiplicity (2015, p. 53-54).

⁴³ As an example, in this work Smithson used salt to link the multiple meanings of the term 'scale' to scale/duration, Massey's space/time. This thread is taken up again in Chapter Three (C.3.1).

It is interesting to note that the artists discussed in this research participated in Correspondence Art and used collage in their practices more generally, along with self-organised initiatives and image calls. This is shown in the image where Wieland is listed along with filmmakers Michael Snow, and David Rimmer in General Idea's zine publication, *FILE* (1972); the filmmakers participated in Image Bank's call for images.⁴⁴ The *IFEL* (1973) issue, an anagram of *FILE*, connects to a thread explored in relation to Sophie Calle's work on daydreaming and the Eiffel Tower (C.3.2).



Figure 7. Image showing the front cover of two issues of the zine, *File* by General Idea, from December 1972 and September 1973.

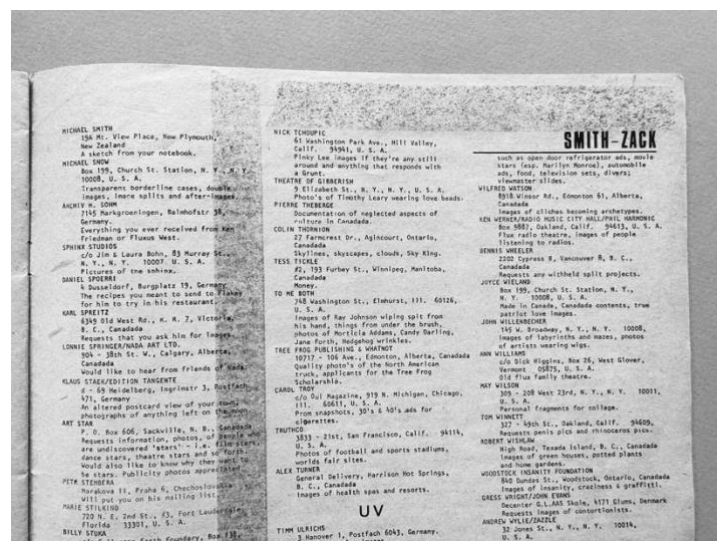


Figure 8. Image showing a page with a list of image calls in *File* (Dec. 1972 issue). Joyce Wieland and Michael Snow's entries are included on this page.

The completion of his jetty structure coincided with Smithson's text *Strata, a Geophotographic Fiction* being published in *Aspen Magazine*, Fall - Winter, 1970/1971. *Aspen Magazine* is an

⁴⁴ General Idea, a Toronto-based artist collective moved to New York in 1986. Image Bank was based in Vancouver.

early Correspondence Art publication (1965-71). It offered an alternative to the gallery exhibition space, 'drawing on the original meaning of the word [magazine] as a storehouse, a cache, a ship laden with stores' (Phyllis Johnson quoted in Saper, 2001, p. 118). The use of a self-organised method of dissemination or exchange using physically and later digitally distributed material, underpins the premise of Correspondence Art. Smithson shared some concerns with Fluxus and this issue, (Issue no 8, edited by Dan Graham) is known as the Fluxus issue. It was designed by George Maciunas who also wrote a manifesto for the New York based Fluxus artists. In Fluxus, amusement was used to challenge distinctions between art and life. As an example of this way of working Smithson subverts the term 'jetty'. Jetty denotes a very specific site, and it is subverted from its instrumentalist meaning by defamiliarising it in a playful way. Instead of being straight-edged and available for traditional use, Smithson's structure takes the form of a curling spiral with undefined boundaries and constructed during a time of drought, was below water for many years, an inversion of a jetty's usual position. Fluxus was active particularly in the 1960s to 1980s and the date of publication of this issue places it after the completion of the jetty structure and during the development of *The Spiral Jetty's* films, texts and photographs.

Lippard explained that artists at this time used self-publishing strategies and 'gloried in speeding past' museum exhibitions 'by means of mail art...and other small-is-better strategies' (2001, p. xvii).⁴⁵ In addition, conceptual artists considered this way of disseminating information, through the post, as distribution. 'For the most part communication was perceived as distribution' (1997, p. xvii). In opposition to dispersal's open-ended (nomadic) procedure, distribution is a sharing out and this denotes a space that is bounded. Boris Groys tells us in *The Weak Universalism*, this movement influenced the developing internet (2010, *Going Public, e-flux Journal #15*, p. 10). The artists in this research used Correspondence Art strategies in their practices more generally and the discussion in Chapter Three on the presentation of landscape as material and as a becoming and the ways in which the landscape was figured. While Correspondence Art can

⁴⁵ Self-publishing is a Correspondence Art strategy that is used in *Inside here* (2016-2022) and exemplified by a list of shares on a blog. In a progression from this *Seminar Project* was an open call for video works (2017-2019). The initial pandemic lockdown in 2020 led to an opportunity to develop an online journal for PhD research initially for RCA with the aim to open calls for contributions to researchers elsewhere. The presentation of forms of research practice in a keyword structure aims for an open-ended presentation of ideas and associations. The development of this journal (in the role of founding editor) paralleled the investigation in this practice-based investigation in Part 3 where the works are presented in an installation format using video and photography. Issue 1: pilot (2021) and Issue 2: iterations (2024) are available online. Issue 1: pilot carries *vault* an explorative video within a multiple work. A photograph and writing in this title is published in Prova, 2020, RCA. This video documented the interior of an under-pier vault (a void) at St Ives, Cornwall. Issue 2: iterations carries *home is where the heart is* one of a series of videos linking to the next steps of this research.

be thought of as a political intervention, it is one that consciously operated within partitions that were social, ideological in the sense of Rancière.

The important thing is that the question of the relationship between aesthetics and politics be raised at this level, the level of the sensible delimitation of what is common to the community, the forms of its visibility and of its organization. It is from this perspective that it is possible to reflect on artists political interventions, starting with the Romantic literary forms that aimed at deciphering society, the Symbolist poetics of dreams or the Dadaist or Constructivist elimination of art, and continuing up to the contemporary modes of performance and installation (Rancière, 2009, p. 18).

Correspondence Art continued online, in accord with the move online more generally, and Massey's proposal for public space to be theorised as a product of social relations, extends to online space (2015, p. 152). She cautioned that in the digital 'what is at issue is the articulation of forms of power within spatial configurations' (2015, p. 93). While On Kawara initially used postcards, he continued his *I am still Alive* (1960s to 2014) artwork using Twitter (now called X), to share the repeated phrase and title of this serial artwork online and extended it to the online space. In his discussion on Derrida's book *The Post Card* (1980), historian Mark Poster observed that online technologies now take the place of the postal system, telephone and even physical meetings (2007, p. 115). The importance of the digital and its impact on social relations is somewhat foreseen by Seth Price in 1998 in his statement that the 'collective experience is now based on simultaneous private experiences', such as facilitated by the post, or (as a progression) the internet. Price speculated on the possibility of 'art distributed to the broadest possible public closes the circle, becoming a private art...' (*Dispersion*, 1998, zine, n.p.). Price seems to connect the personal view to a space that is bounded harmonising with Lippard's point that communication is perceived as distribution.

Online Correspondence Art can also be exemplified by the participatory movement that was supported by the Furtherfield artist cooperative, called Do it With Others (DIWO) (Catlow, 2008). This research progresses from (while not including) *Inside here* (2015-2022). This work draws on the Correspondence Art strategies of self-publishing and collage, and the affordances of the dimension of online space provided by a blog site's participatory dimension. *Inside here* upcycled smart phone native app technology as art media with the aim to facilitate a subjective, relational experience of space. It complicated the vertical dimension to question the grid used in cartography in the contexts of mimesis and place-

centricity.⁴⁶ *Inside here* raised questions around the smart phone, and the technologies and ideologies facilitated by this device. Smart phones and GPS (satellite technology) use technologies developed in the fields of science research, and it may seem unconventional to explore these within art practice. It is interesting to note here that Barbara Bolt, in her writing on iterative practice suggested that, in science as well as in art, it may be that 'paradigmatic shifts have occurred through this mutability rather than repetition of the same'. She suggested that science research may have a procedural flaw, iterative practice and the mutability of repetition may play a yet unacknowledged part in science-as-research (2016, p. 12).

With the aim to subvert cartography's grid while using it, this artwork presented a diaristic list of shares on a blog (using image calls and self-publishing) a way of working that draws on Correspondence Art strategies and errancy.⁴⁷ The research progresses from the intention in this artwork to repurpose journeys to document the landscape as a relational experience by complicating verticality. The practice used digital video, film photography and graphite drawing (C.4). Although the media may seem to lack continuity with *Inside here*, it is interesting to note that the immersible digital camera, in the place of a screen, generates a wireless signal to connect to a phone where an app communicates with the camera; connectivity is a feature in digital cameras. Although video is used, this research is not investigating digital technology. Instead, the main field of reference is structural film. The progression in this research included an enquiry into the vertical dimension's hierarchical quality, and the online work complicated it.

For Massey 'all spaces are, at least a little, accidental, and have an element of heterotopia' (2015, p. 116). She cautioned that the digital space may challenge priorities to do with affect starting close in, with local (physical) area (2015, p. 95). Hito Steyerl writing in *Duty Free Art* observed the 'strongest affective address' of the digital is somehow linked to the epistolary mode and therefore writing's connection to delay. For Steyerl, this is changed in the digital, but a sense of absence (lack of presence, physically) remains the same (2017, p. 117). Delay is a way to defamiliarise, acknowledging distance and this is an attribute of the material landscape for Massey (2015, p. 94). The durational images discussed in this research each re-purpose a journey to document a path while referencing the delay of travel. While these are very personal works and the artists are present in their works, there is also a strong sense of absence,

⁴⁶ The practice uses Correspondence Art strategies more generally.

⁴⁷ Correspondence Art is drawn on in the discussion on the works of Wieland, Smithson, and Calle in Chapter Three. Image calls, self-publishing and cut up (collage) are strategies used by these artists in their practices more generally.

physically, that draws the viewer in. Svetlana Boym, writing in *Poetics Today* on Victor Shklovsky and Hannah Arendt, observed defamiliarisation or estrangement is a way artworks emphasise process, ambivalence, and play, to see anew (2005, p. 586-7). This links to Derrida's fundamental recognition of space in his concept *différance*. Meaning cannot be captured and fixed instead it is in effect, pushed up the path, deferred (allowing difference) in an experience that is recursive and iterative. Boym further observed that for Arendt distance 'is a fundamental feature of humanity' because 'we are all the same' and 'nobody is ever the same' (2005, p. 600). This accords with Spinoza's conceptualisation of affect theorised in Massey as a balance between sociability and the individual, bringing into view other bodies and other ways of thinking (Gregg et al., 2010) (C.1).

Playing at, Dadaism

The works discussed in this research are in a progression from Dadaism. Wieland is a post-Dadaist artist. In the catalogue to her retrospective exhibition in Toronto in 1987, curator Marie Fleming highlights the humour in Dadaism (Wieland, 1987, p. 25). Lippard also highlights what seems to be a contradiction in Wieland's work, her Dadaist influences and her desire to connect with her audience. The shock generated by the interrupted chains of ideas and associations in a Dadaist work of art which Benjamin extended to film, is affective (2008, p. 32). His discussion considers the individual in relation to the social experience of the city in terms of threat. 'Film is the art form that corresponds to the heightened state of mortal peril that modern man must face' due to the increase in the pace of life, its shocks (and threat of shock) more generally (2008, p. 49).

Benjamin tells us Dadaist artists recognised and connected in their work to the ways in which social relations and ideologies were changing, in part due to the emergent medium of film (2008).⁴⁸ During this time the social function of art changed, and the politics of social practice replaced the shared judgements that Kant described, the fundamental role of ritual in art (2008, p. 12-13). Kant's sub-language is in accord with late Modernity and so is not archaic and he moved away from mimesis (representation). In these contexts, it is interesting to think of the social in terms of ritual, the ways in which the digital space is used and the fundamental roles of the landscape and ritual in art.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ In his *Critique of Judgment* (1790) Kant explains how we see beauty in art in relation to nature, morality connects to nature and art, and these are shared judgments (Arendt, 1989, p. 76).

⁴⁹ Mary Douglas' book *Purity and Danger*, where she writes on ritual and anomaly, analyses ritual as a form of control and dirt offends against it. Dirt is anomaly in Douglas (aligning with the personal as defined by Arendt, below) and is suggestive of Smithson's materialism and his notion of non-site (2002, p. 2).

2.3 The Picturesque Landscape

Smithson, Wieland, and Calle engage with the personal, that which Arendt explained is not relevant in relation to the public realm in her book *The Human Condition* (1998, p. 71). To do so, they offer forms that are recursive, vertiginous, and open-ended. Arendt explained there is a contradiction in Kant:

Infinite progress is the law of the human species; at the same time, man's dignity depends on that he be seen (every single one of us) in his particularity and, as such, be seen - but without any comparison and independent of time - as reflecting mankind in general...It is against human dignity to believe in progress. Progress, moreover, means that the story never has an end. The end of the story itself is in infinity. There is no point at which we might stand still and look back with the backward glance of the historian (1989, p. 77).

While all the works discussed in this research are constrained works, they are open-ended in that they free thought to space/time. While all space is open and vast, they are constrained by the paths they follow and the ideologies they investigate. In this sense they are contrary to the sublime. However, the works afford the viewer agency in accord with the contradiction Arendt found in Kant. They exist in an affective balance between the sociability denoted by the path in each work and the individuality of Massey's discrete multiplicity (stories-so-far) and in this way they are open-ended. This is a balance that harmonises with Rancière's theorising on critical artworks more generally, as an uncertain mode of practice (C.1). In Massey, space is 'made up of embedded material practices' and while these artists documented material paths, they present non-teleological understandings of the landscape (2015, p. 9) (C.1). In these works the path plays a role of a schematising dimension. Nancy writes on the schema in *The Ground of the Image*, as a recursivity that is fundamental to imagination.

This look that unifies the sensible and sensibilizing unity (the chiasmus of the two is what properly makes up the gesture, the site, and the art of the schema) forms the schematizing operation, which does not first give an image but is nonetheless related to "something like an image" (for which Heidegger introduces the expression "schema-image"). The schematism operates through a "like-an-image" that constitutes at once a quasi-image and an image of image, that is, in the first or final instance, an antecedence of the image to itself, its imaging arrival or occurrence: its imagination. This imagination is what sees before and outside itself the look that it will present to us and allow us to represent to ourselves (2005, p. 89).

In this research, Smithson's role shifted to one of theorist. His understanding of the picturesque landscape developed during the making process. *The Spiral Jetty* multiple artwork (1970-1972) is within the understanding of the picturesque tradition Smithson derived from Burke's writings and the landscape artists Uvedale Price (1747-1829) and William Gilpin (1724 – 1804) as referenced in Flam (1996, p. 159). He visited specific landscape sites in the UK in 1969 to derive

his theories on the picturesque park, which he then developed in his Land Art in a progression from Burke and Kant (1996, p. 159). Smithson's paper on the American picturesque, *Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape* was published in Artforum in 1973, soon after he completed *The Spiral Jetty*; the film was completed in 1972 (1996, p. 159). In Smithson the picturesque is politically democratic and not a 'nostalgia for church authority'. Instead, Smithson supported the interpretation that Gilpin and Price developed, the 'democratic dialectic between the sylvan and the industrial' (1996, p. 162) (C.3.1). Olmsted's (1850) design for New York City's Central Park exemplified his democratic interpretation of the picturesque (1996, p. 157-171). In contrast to Gilpin and Price, Olmsted used technology and the heavy machinery that Smithson used in the construction of the jetty structure is documented in his film (C.3.1).⁵⁰ Smithson foregrounded materialism and while Modernism and abstraction were ideational, a picturesque park is a 'process of on-going relationships existing in a physical region' (1996, p. 160). In Smithson, beauty is the thesis, sublime the antithesis and the picturesque is the synthesis (1996, p. 159). In temporal terms, while the beautiful is instantaneous and the sublime infinitude, the picturesque can be thought of as multiplicity (multiple timelines). His notion of the picturesque connects with Atwood's 1972 analysis of poetic forms in her book *Survival* (2012).

Nature (Atwood)

Atwood's analyses of author positions are shown in relation to the landscapes she found in the writing of immigrants (to Canada and America). She explained, in their writing immigrants to Canada from the UK show influences derived from Burke (2012, p. 46). However, she found that there were differences and these were due to the qualities of the landscapes and the overarching political structures (ideologies) of the nation-states. It is interesting to consider Atwood's analysis, first published in 1972, three years after Wieland's film was made and the year Smithson completed and published *The Spiral Jetty* film. Smithson opposed the place-centricity of Frontierism; Frontierism is associated with the American project (Atwood, 2012). Instead, of showing a bounded place, in his multiple artwork Smithson presented space in a relationship with temporality. He brought scale and duration together and presented a 'slipping sense of scale' (Shapiro quoted in Roberts, 2004, p. 136). The recursive structure of Smithson's multiple artwork encompasses the infinitely large and small, the distant past and the future.

⁵⁰ For Smithson Olmsted's work is 'more democratic' than the landscape practices he studied in Europe. This is exemplified by Olmsted's use of technology which indicated inclusivity for Smithson. He found a class-based idea of sublimity in Europe. In Smithson, the sublime comes back to the people (Flam, 1996, p. 162).



Figure 9. The photograph *East & West Shaking Hands at Laying of Last Rail* (1869) by Andrew J. Russell now in the public domain, showing the X shape of his composition.

The Spiral Jetty documents the landscape in ways that include the processes of nature; the landscape is always in motion. There was a controversial centenary celebration held nearby just before he started construction on the jetty structure (Roberts, 2004, p. 116).⁵¹ He dispersed the landscape in opposition to the place-centricity marked by the Golden Spike Monument, a monument to Frontierism and one that Roberts describes as punctual, instant in temporal terms (Roberts, 2004, p. 125). This is shown by Andrew J. Russell's, 1869 photograph (Figure 9) within which the composition of dignitaries and equipment famously mark the spot with an X.

The park

Parks can be thought of in connection with contemplation through their role as alternative spaces, however, as Massey cautioned 'all spaces are, at least a little, accidental, and have an element of heterotopia.' (2015, p. 116). Massey further observed 'the tendency to romanticise public space as an emptiness which enables free and equal speech does not take on board the need to theorise space and place as the product of social relations which are most likely conflicting and unequal' (2015, p.152). Central Park in New York ultimately failed to support Olmstead's concept of inclusivity. Rebecca Solnit explained, New York's Central Park was soon taken over by those with carriages; pedestrian promenades moved to Battery Park and other areas. Other public parks in New York followed the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens tradition and

⁵¹ Canada celebrated a centennial anniversary in 1967 and similarly, Wieland made her flag shaped film in an investigation of the notion of nation-state as bounded that she found in Trudeau's motto. She used three sections of footage that she filmed between 1965 and 1968 to document her path (in two parts) and Trudeau at a political rally.

charged an entrance fee while providing music for dancing and other entertainments. This brings to mind Solnit's writing in *Wanderlust* on walking, when walking is considered another way, as a subversive activity (2014, p. 271). Although walking along footpaths (ancient rights-of-way) is advocated in the UK by groups such as The Ramblers Association and other pressure groups, when she attempted to walk the Las Vegas strip in Nevada, there were obstacle. Las Vegas is a successor to the pleasure gardens, and Solnit highlights pedestrian rights-of-way and the problem of privatised pavements (2014, p. 283).

Smithson worked within the Land Art movement whereas the practice, discussed in Chapter Four, documented existing paths in public green spaces. The first two sites are Hyde Park and Hampstead Heath. The third site the Parkland Walk exemplifies the promenade. It is a reclaimed railway embankment, repurposed in 1984 as a footpath (in two parts) leading to Alexandra Palace, a building constructed for a World Exhibition known as 'the people's palace'. In this site, there is a mid-point hiatus at some road vaults, where the tracks bypassed the woods underground. Walkers are released to other paths. Another structure built for a World Exhibition is the Eiffel Tower (with vault shapes at its foot). Roland Barthes suggested the tower can be thought of as a line, and this way he connects the tower to path (1997). Its copies (exemplified by the quarter sized Eiffel Tower in Las Vegas) are drawn on in Chapter Three in the writing on Calle's work where she investigates the daydream in the context of a social structure (C.3) and in Chapter Four (4.2 *the sky is taught by falling*). Calle documented one night in the Eiffel Tower as a site of stories in her photograph and text work *Room with a View / Chambre Avec Vue* (2002) and this is also drawn on. It was interesting to note that the clearer skies during the initial Covid19 lockdown in London instigated a meme (during which time *the sky is taught by falling* was initiated). That Londoners mistook the communications tower at Crystal Palace, a structure built for the first great exhibition held in Hyde Park, for the Eiffel Tower somehow proves Barthes' point (Kholam, 2020).

Imaginations of subjectivity

To support her position that identity should be thought of as constituted within the relational, Massey included philosopher Elizabeth Grosz' analysis, where she explained:

In Kant's conception, too, while space and time are *a priori* categories we impose on the world, space is the mode of apprehension of exterior objects, and time a mode of apprehension of the subject's own interior (Irigaray quoted in Massey, 2015, p. 57)

Linking the distinction between time and space to gender and imaginations of subjectivity, Massey quoted Grosz, 'This may explain why Luce Irigaray claims that in the West time is

conceived as masculine (proper to a subject, a being with an interior) and space is associated with femininity (femininity being a form of exteriority to men). Woman provides a space for man, but occupies none herself...' (Grosz quoted in Massey, 2015, p. 57). As an alternative to Grosz' argument, Massey includes a school of thought which she labels as 'philosophical miserabilism' this way linked to an obsessive fear of death (2015, p. 58). Either way, substituting space/time for time (when time is theorised as interior) links space/time to identity and subjectivity. The importance of spatiality in experience positions identity as central to the political (2015, p. 56-58) (C.1).

Survival

Considering Atwood's analysis, her book is written from a Canadian perspective about immigrants from Europe who suddenly found themselves coping with the wilderness. The label 'philosophical miserabilism' in relation to identity might be putting a cheerful gloss over the resultant writings, although here obsession with death seems appropriate and threat marked their (future) experience (Massey, 2015, p. 58).⁵² Canada did not make the cut from colonialism that was America's revolution. While in English (UK) literature the role of nature is to exemplify (represent) social relations, Atwood finds immigrants to Canada and America use positions in relation to nature that are different to each other, and to those used in the UK, due to their different material and social landscapes.⁵³ Immigrants from the UK applied their understanding of nature to the landscape. Atwood observed 'the prevailing literary mode in Nature poetry in the late eighteenth century as derived from Edmund Burke was the cult of the sublime and the picturesque, featuring views and inspirational scenery' although this was changed in Canada by the quality of the wilderness (2012, p. 46).

Atwood applied the label Survival to Canadian literature, rather than Frontierism. Ideological differences are presented in English, Canadian and American literature in an analysis of the role of the animal in poetic forms. In Canadian literature Atwood identified (five) author victim positions (2012). She explained there is a tension between the literary mode derived from Burke and the Romanticism of the first half of the 19th century. Where Burke highlighted Kant's dialectic in temporal terms (the infinite sublime and the beautiful as instantaneous), the picturesque becomes a middle ground of multiple temporalities (Smithson's synthesis), Wordsworthian Romanticism presented nature as a kind mother, a nurse, or a guide (2012, p. 46). Although this

⁵² Threat is affective in the sense of Massumi (Gregg et al., 2010, p. 55) (C.4).

⁵³ While American literature offers ideas about animals being killed (a form of winning the game), stories about animals being killed are also found in Canadian literature, although here from the animal's point of view (Atwood, 1972, p. 75).

shifted later in England with Darwinism, the works of the large influx of immigrants already in Canada, Atwood explained, presented 'the tension between what you were officially supposed to feel and what you actually encountered' (2012, p. 47).

This is exemplified for Atwood by diarist Susan Moodie's writings in 1852 about her everyday concerns, for example her vegetable garden, and Atwood explains 'Moodie copes with the contradiction by dividing Nature itself in two' (2012, p. 46). For Moodie there is nature in the distance, of which she was appreciative. This aspect of nature (sublime and beautiful) was considered to be indifferent. On the other hand, nature close in, her environment (picturesque) was hostile because it was indifferent (to her) and not nurturing. Here the picturesque is somewhat overlaid by Wordsworth, yet these immigrants contextualised the picturesque within the sublime and beautiful forces of nature making up the wilderness. Significantly, Atwood points out that rather than the subject matter, it is the attitude to the subject matter that constitutes the Canadian 'signature' (2012, p. 267). The close in, the picturesque is not thought of as a bounded space and therefore safe and controllable. Instead, it is in the larger context of the beautiful and the sublime wilderness.

Atwood's analysis is exemplified by Wieland's film *La raison avant la passion*, a film predominantly made up of views of nature. Bruce Elder writing about this film, in his paper *Joyce Wieland and the Canadian Experimental Cinema*, published in the book, *The films of Joyce Wieland* (1999), explained landscape artists in Canada have a conception of the frame at odds with American Modernists. The discussion in his paper includes David Rimmer's documentarist practice and Snow's structural one. Wieland's work presents what for B. Elder is a 'diacritical function'; her frame is a 'transitional device'. He explains this is 'the Canadian tradition of image-making' and 'it was this that lead them to reject the modernist doctrine' (K. Elder, 1999, p. 67-68).⁵⁴ This is taken up in the next Chapter in the discussion on Wieland and in Chapter Four in the discussion on the diaristic, performative quality of the artworks. This approach is suggestive of the present tense. This quality is in the progression from Warhol's early work in film, for example *Sleep* (1964) which appears to be one long take. This film's long length brings corporeality into view, one's own body within the context of other bodies in a way suggestive of the present tense.

⁵⁴ Wieland is listed along with Snow and Rimmer, in General Idea's zine publication, *FILE* (1972) participating in Image Bank's call for images.

Wieland's structural film *Sailboat* (1967) exemplifies another image that stays in the present tense. The sailboat's horizontal drift across the image plane is repeated until it overturns in the final frame. The picturesque view is interrupted by the wilderness when the loss of the boat's buoyant presence brings the horizon into view. Chantal Akerman's practice is drawn on in the discussion on Wieland's work and her later film *News from Home* (1977) is another example suggestive of the temporality found in Warhol (Russell, 1999, p. 169) (C.3.2).

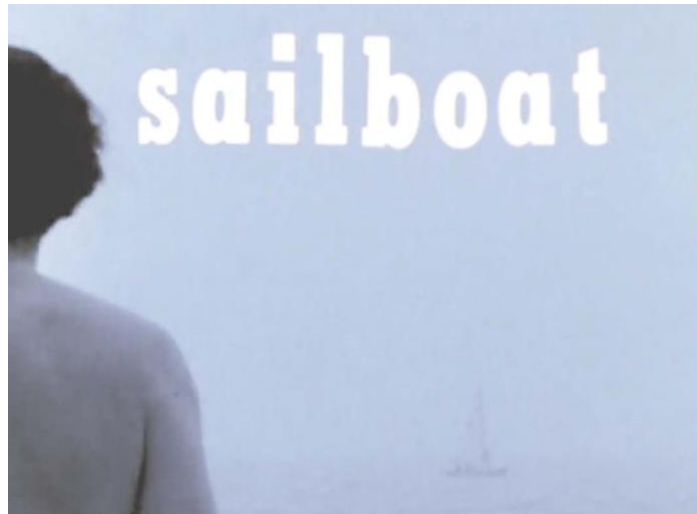


Figure 10. Digital still from *Sailboat* (1967) by Joyce Wieland.

Chapter Conclusions

The investigation in this research is between two registers, the abstract dimension of space as becoming and materialism. It is investigative of the spatiality of specific works that are within the landscape genre. The artists discussed in this research work on or near to the cusp of Modernity. There is a sensitivity to boundaries in these works and while there is a proximity to the New York art world, they reach outside the museum using structural film strategies, Correspondence Art and diarism, and for Smithson Land Art. Distance becomes an important attribute of these works shown in the way the body is positioned in the landscape.

Picturesque manifestations of the landscape

This research positions practice as theory to deliver a cognitive content in a similar manner as theory expressed using other forms. To support this approach, practitioners, for example Margaret Atwood, take the role of theorist. Atwood (in 1972) and Smithson (in 1973) each published an analysis of nation-specific notions of the picturesque, derived from Burke in a progression from Kant. Robert Smithson's role likewise shifted to one of theorist. His non-site work is investigative of a notion of the picturesque and his writing is also drawn on. Peter Gidal and Malcolm Le Grice's practices brought into view ideas that are fundamental to moving image.

The following Chapters elucidate the strategies and role of structural materialism in specific art works.

This leads to the discussion on the ways in which artists bring about what Massey describes as a practiced spatiality (2015, p. 9). Artists used strategies of dispersal to effect a transformation.⁵⁵ In some ways a recursive structure could be said to be not in need of documenting since, at any given position the extension is predictable. On the other hand, in a contrast with the mediated videos discussed in Chapter Four the paradigmatic recursive structure is fractal. In Smithson's multiple artwork, the salt crystals that form around the rocks have fractal structures yet the jetty itself is approximate and roughly made. However, the earth itself is fractal from a distance (Ingold, 2015, p. 42 - 43). This will be taken up in Chapter Three, in the writing in Part 1 on Smithson's *The Spiral Jetty* film.

⁵⁵ The artworks can be understood as a series of intuitions as Paglen observed in his artist's talk on Smithson's work at Dia (year).

Chapter Three

This Chapter provides an interpretation and formal analysis of the artworks introduced in Chapter One and listed below.

Part 1

Robert Smithson, *The Spiral Jetty* (1970 – 1972)
Multiple artwork: film, structure, photographs, text

Film 16mm film, colour and sound (1972)
Duration: 33 minutes

Part 2

Joyce Wieland, *La raison avant la passion / Reason over Passion* (1969-1983)
In this title: film, printmaking, soft sculpture

Film: 16mm film, computer generated anagrams, colour and black and white, sound (1969)
Duration: 83:40 minutes

Part 3

Sophie Calle, *Double Blind / No Sex Last Night* (1996)
Video: Analogue video, text, colour and sound
Duration: 75 minutes

To reiterate as a summary and provide context for the works discussed in this Chapter, the monument is a frame, in terms of the path. In Smithson, Wieland and Calle's moving image works the path and monument exemplify conceptual frame(s). Discussion in this Chapter is on how the material path is documented in the works while showing its contingent (transitional) dimension as a frame in the site. The works present a paradoxical understanding of the frame, as a transitional edge, a dissolution of the frame derived from their understandings of the landscape (C. 2). The works discussed in this Chapter each present a re-purposed journey to a site, an exhibition or an academic post.⁵⁶ While a path leads to a destination and the material path is documented in these works, the discussion that follows is on the ways in which the works resist linearity and complicate the final forms so that the contingent transitional dimension of the frame is shown.

⁵⁶ The term present is used here in the sense of structural materialism in film. However, this artwork and all the artworks discussed in this Chapter also reach out to the quality of the landscape found in Nancy's discussion on presentation and the sublime. For Nancy 'The condition of the schematism is nothing other than freedom itself' (2003, p. 239).

Part 1

Robert Smithson, *The Spiral Jetty* (1970 – 1972)
Multiple artwork: film, structure, photographs, text

Film 16mm film, colour and sound (1972)
Duration: 33 minutes

In *The Spiral Jetty* film, Smithson documented the (proposed) site at Rozel Point, Great Salt Lake, Utah; the site in a relationship with its construction; and finally, the jetty structure in its site. In his book *Earthwards, Robert Smithson and Art after Babel*, Gary Shapiro observed 'In one sense Smithson was never concerned with anything other than the monumental...' He further observed '...the monument is a public work of art. One that is meant to focus a general attention on whatever it is that is vital to the way in which a community understands itself.' (1995, p. 22-23). While it is appended to the nearby monument and Smithson complicated the monument on a conceptual level in this work, as well as in his practice more generally, *The Spiral Jetty* multiple artwork can be understood as an exploration into Smithson's notion of non-site. It is investigative of the temporality that he derived from Burke's theorising on the landscape as picturesque. In this sense, the subjective view is somehow the destination in the work.

The first part of *The Spiral Jetty* film presents the landscape in the context of cartography's fundamentals. Images of maps alternate with views of the journeys to or from the site. While the map used in cartography presents the world as finished, cartography's grid does not document the practices that produce it and instead, the world is represented by a series of locations (Ingold, 2016, p. 26). Longitude and latitude are used as guidelines to 'plot a course from one location to another' (2016, p. 161). To disperse the grid, in *The Spiral Jetty* text Smithson played with the term scale. He connected the term scale to ladder and then inverted 'means of ascent' to write about descending from logic.⁵⁷ The term ascent connects to transcend, to go beyond, and he writes about moving to the surd state, surd meaning an irrational number (Flam, 1996 p. 150).⁵⁸ Smithson's approach in the text is a juxtaposition of inverted concepts and forms, the rational and the irrational in mathematics and logic, the mute and spoken sound, the grid and

⁵⁷ In French the term *échelle* is used for both ladder and scale. The term rational refers to a category of numbers in mathematics (numbers can be rational or irrational) and alternatively to reason or logic. Smithson played with the meaning of mathematical terms: rational, equation, set of coordinates, variable, surd and proclaimed in the text, 'the equation of my language remains unstable, a shifting set of coordinates, the arrangement of variable spilling into surds.' 'The surd 'takes over' (Flam, 1996, p. 150).

⁵⁸ 'Surd' can be alternatively defined as meaning a voiceless consonant. To sound a voiceless consonant, exemplified by 't', does not require the vocal cords.

the spiral.⁵⁹

This approach is shown in the scenes of driving to and from the site. The viewer is placed in an elevated position and looks down on the surface of the road. The vehicle being absent, the individual is exposed within the scale of the landscape. There are five such scenes during the first part of the film with the camera in an elevated position filming the surface of the (moving) road. These scenes document the landscape and the vehicle's absence from the image and present a paradoxical view of the landscape as empty. Smithson theorised on the site and non-site as 'a double path' and both are 'present and absent at the same time' (Flam, 1996, p. 153).⁶⁰ In this sense the views of road filmed while driving to and from the site, the road ahead and the dust behind, link the film with his non-site exploration through the metaphor of path while documenting the landscape in accord with structural materialism in film (C.1). Smithson was a theorist in perspective and for him views using Renaissance perspective denote an inherent political structure. The focus that is afforded by a perspective view is in this sense, also a destination, a representation in terms of Lefebvre. For Smithson the picturesque park afforded 'chance and change', a condition of uncertainty (Flam, 1996, p. 159). The discussion in this section is on the ways in which Smithson complicated the final forms in his work.

The idea of recursivity in *The Spiral Jetty* has obvious connections to the path, although differences too. The scenes of driving present a chiasmic form, and this artwork includes a spiral structure.⁶¹ The structure, in its remote desert location, may seem to afford a destination for the determined visitor (at times it was underwater), but playfully the structure itself, when followed as a path, offers no further destination. Part 3 of the film documents Smithson moving (running and walking) along the jetty path and in the film, he pauses at the end (centre) of the spiral. And yet, this is clearly not the destination and once he reaches this point he turns away, leaving instead an impression of duration.⁶² The path of the jetty takes the walker on a journey to nowhere, and by effectively moving a walker around in the landscape on a seemingly useless journey the jetty path becomes its antithesis.

⁵⁹ His play in meanings to defamiliarise suggests something Deleuze writes about in his exploration of concepts and the temporal dimension, when he theorised concepts to be always becoming (Braidotti et al., 2012). Daniel W. Smith writing in *Revisiting Normativity with Deleuze* observed that the critique of the concept parallels the critique of identity of the self in Deleuze. The concepts 'only identity lies in experimentation, that is, in their intrinsic variability and mutations' (Deleuze quoted in Braidotti et al., 2012, p. 176).

⁶⁰ This is an image that doubles, reaching out to infinitude in Nancy (2003, p. 239).

⁶¹ A spiral can take a left or right 'handedness' depending on its direction of turning. In this way it is an enantiomorphic shape, exemplified by the right and left-handedness of hands that are identical and yet one cannot fit into the space of the other.

⁶² This scene connects the film to Chris Marker's film *La Jetée* (1966).

Helen Molesworth explained, minimalism investigates ‘the art object’s dependence upon a traditionally defined public site’ asking viewers to consider themselves in relation ‘to the object and also to the room in which that object was encountered’ (Newman et al., 1999, p. 118). Smithson, as a post-minimalist artist, worked during an uncertain time, one of change as Jameson and Harvey observed (C.2.1). The dispersed artwork that is *The Spiral Jetty* asks *where within social relations is the artwork?* subverting, through widening minimalism’s question *what in the site is the artwork?* In the discussion on Part 3 of the film, the jetty is shown as unobtainable (the present time) and cannot offer a destination (when destination is thought of as a location). The tension in this artwork is emphasised by the remote location of the jetty; that it is unavailable in a material way (for walking on) while *The Spiral Jetty* as a multiple, dispersed artwork in various media allows a more available and personal interaction affording the viewer agency in the work.⁶³

Monumentality

Smithson’s library included Bergson’s book, *Creative Evolution*, 1907, where Bergson acknowledged duration ‘in external things’ (Bergson quoted in Massey, 2015, p. 24).⁶⁴ This is a ‘radical change’ and key to Massey’s argument in *For Space* (2015, p. 24) (C.2.1, p.xx). During his talk at the Dia Foundation in New York American artist Trevor Paglen observed that Smithson, drawing on Bergson, found his conception of duration in the works of art historian George Kubler, where ‘duration is not Newtonian, not absolute’ (Paglen quoted in Buckingham, 2020, p. 130). This is exemplified by the scenes of driving, discussed in the following sections on Part 1 of the film. Paglen in turn draws on Bergson and observed that in *The Spiral Jetty* duration can only be known through intuition and images can never be complete, due to the past being dependent on future re-imaginings (Buckingham, 2020, p. 132).⁶⁵ Paglen investigates this way of understanding time in his own work, as shown in his exhibition *Ceci n’est pas une pomme*, in 2020 at the Barbican Centre in London (Cook et al., 2019, p. 38).

The scenes of Smithson walking on his structure are documented in Part 3 of the film using a downwards view from a helicopter. The threat implied by this view is affective.⁶⁶ It can be

⁶³ Tacita Dean could not find the site on her initial attempt to visit *The Spiral Jetty* in its remote location in Utah. Instead, a resultant sound piece *Trying to find the Spiral Jetty* (1997) documented her search (Dean, 1997)

⁶⁴ Smithson’s library was documented (Smithson et al., 2004, p. 255).

⁶⁵ In Kant, imagination is a movement between intuition and concept (Arendt, 1989, p. 81).

⁶⁶ Massumi tells us, in the future a past threat will continue to be real, regardless how it plays out, because threat is affective. This is a distinctly non-linear understanding of time, where affect is dispersed through space/time in a way that accords with the notion of space as becoming (Gregg et al., 2010, p. 55) (C.4). Walter Benjamin connects the

understood as a reference to America's involvement in Vietnam and it is a view used by newscasts more generally. It brings attention to a way of lending authority to an image and an understanding of space as place that may now seem outmoded, and which Atwood labels Frontierism (C.2). It is an understanding of space as finished or closed to which Smithson's practice was opposed. He positioned his spiral structure near The Golden Spike Monument which had recently celebrated its controversial centenary (Roberts, 2004, p. 5) (C.2). Smithson explored the monument in his practice more generally and this work puts pressure on the frame, the monument is a frame in this site and his work destabilises it.

Instead of offering a grid-based location Smithson documented the landscape as made up of practices that produce it, and therefore, acknowledged the delay that complicates it. In *The Spiral Jetty* multiple artwork, his playful, playing at, strategies afford uncertainty. For example, he played with the term 'scale' to defamiliarise and delay meaning making. Working with an iterative process, he dispersed meaning by referring to multiple understandings and this way emphasised context. The strategies he used in the film to disperse the grid and present the landscape as uncertain, facilitate the 'slipping sense of scale' that Shapiro observed and Roberts highlights in her analysis of his practice more generally (Shapiro quoted in Roberts, 2004, p. 136). Smithson's film highlights material in an investigation of its own production and presents a conceptualisation of monumentality in terms of a path that is correlative with structural film's self-referential procedure. The ways in which the image space and frame(s) (including the monument and path as a frame) are dispersed in this work in the contexts of his site and the landscape more generally, are taken up in the following sections.

The discussion that follows is on *The Spiral Jetty* film and takes a tripartite form.⁶⁷ In this image, the image frame, process and material of film are initially brought into view. In the second part, process and material is highlighted in the context of the landscape more generally. Finally, the discussion is on the spiral structure in its material relation to the landscape.

1. Documenting the site

10 min

18 scenes

bird's-eye downwards view to newsreels and the masses (2008, p. 50). In Smithson's artwork, the helicopter closely following his seemingly vulnerable figure running on the exposed structure, also links the film to the current stories-so-far (Massey) of his milieu.

⁶⁷ The analysis of each part of the film started with a summary of scenes and durations to bring the shape of the film into view. For B. Elder a 'simple shape' is an attribute of structural film (K. Elder, 1999, p. 65).

In the initial scene a fixed frame view of the sun's turbulent surface is shown, followed by a zoom to a closer view. In his practice more generally Smithson investigated light as material (Lippard, 2001, p. 87).⁶⁸ In these scenes, the virtual movement of the zoom is contrasted with an actual move forward along the path of a road with the camera documenting a position within a moving vehicle.⁶⁹ The vehicle itself is not shown, although the sound of the vehicle is heard. The horizon is high in the image and the road appears to move towards the viewer and it runs down through the centre of the frame as the camera is moved along the road. When the camera nears a small rise ahead, the long perspectival view shortens. Now the road ahead and the landscape appear more vertical in the frame while the view of the road's surface continues to run downwards through the frame.

Smithson included five similar scenes of driving to and from the site in this part of the film and he used views filmed with the camera within a moving car or truck, to film the road ahead or the raised dust behind. Views of the road ahead and the dust behind make up roughly one quarter (2.5 min) of the ten minutes given to documenting the proposed site.⁷⁰ In these scenes an illusion of the moving road as it appears to move toward or away from the viewer brings the surface plane of the image into view. The illusion seems to flow out of or to enter the lower edge of the image, bringing the frame of the image into view, destabilising it. The gaze is positioned as the making of an image; the viewer, positioned in the present time and in the material world, is in the role of observer. This scene and the vehicle's continuing absence, places the emphasis on the viewer. To understand the image, the viewer is required to continually reassess their position in relation to the image bringing into view material and what is known in the world in accord with structural materialism in film (C.2).

The move forward along the path of a road documented by a camera within the moving vehicle is a form of tracking shot, the camera continuously reframing the image. However, the absence of the vehicle within the filmic image and the illusion of being suspended above the moving road

⁶⁸ In a discussion on his mirror displacements in the Yucatan, Smithson explains he is 'bringing the light down to the ground'. He further explains that it is not the ways in which a traditional artistic material interacts with light that interests him but instead, it is actual light itself, and he connects his structure to infinitude through light's unbounded quality (Lippard, 2001, p. 87). Moving in or through connects to Smithson's walk on the structure in Part 3 of the film, and the aerial views of the structure contrast an actual (physical) movement, with the illusion of the road that moves through the image frame, and the virtual movement of a zoom. The closing sequence of aerial views show *The Spiral Jetty* structure as alternatively a dark and a light spiral shape as the helicopter changes the exposure of the film (its own physical position in relation to the sun). The jetty image is shown to be a tonal enantiomorph. In the change from a dark spiral, silhouetted against the bright water, to a light shape against the dark water, the processes and materiality of film are brought into view, and light is shown as material.

⁶⁹ Snow investigated a virtual and actual path in his films *Wavelength* (1967) and *Breakfast* (1976) (C.2).

⁷⁰ The 3.75 min of fixed frame views, including the scenes filmed while driving, make up more than one third of the duration of this part of *The Spiral Jetty* film.

subverts the immersive nature of the tracking shot. Continuous reframing 'implies a process of opening up and revealing' (Rees, 2020, p. 26). However, the long forward view of the open landscape and the views behind do not promise a reveal. As the view is reframed with the camera moving forward, the road appears to flow down through the frame prompting the viewer to attend to the frame of the image. In this way the shot's constraints, instead of offering an immersive experience and a reveal within the image, act as a device to unsettle and see anew. This way the subjective viewer is afforded agency in the artwork. The space the viewer inhabits, and the filmic space seen as a dispersed space(s) precludes consumption. There is a shift from the moving road (a path) in the film to the vehicle and path the viewer imagines, and this can be understood in the terms of a reveal in the sense that the viewer supplies the reveal, in the form of a subjective understanding.



Figure 11. Digital still from *The Spiral Jetty* film (1972) by Robert Smithson showing the road behind and raised dust.

Non-site

The unobtainable present

Smithson documented his site in a way other documentation is not able to do. 'As long as art is thought of as creation', he commented in an interview 'it will be the same old story' and he documented his site in ways distinct from creating a site.⁷¹ He observed that people bring their own reality to his work, and a conversation ensued about choosing and working with a site and his developing theory of the non-site. These ideas come together in the process of a search for a site where, '...dimension seems to be lost in the process' and there is a 'sinking into

⁷¹ This is an interview with Patricia Anne Norvell in 1969, edited by Lucy Lippard and Robert Smithson (Smithson quoted in Lippard, 2001, p. 89-90).

timelessness' (Smithson quoted in Lippard, 2001, p. 89-90).

In other words, you are really going from some place to some place, which is to say, nowhere in particular. To be located between those two points puts you in a position of elsewhere, so there's no focus. This outer edge and this center constantly subvert each other, cancel each other out. There is a suspension of destination (Smithson quoted in Lippard, 2001, p. 89).

In Smithson the future criss-crosses the past as an unobtainable present (Flam, 1996, p. 34). The present time as unobtainable corresponds in some ways with the hidden interval he found in the paintings of Ad Reinhardt (Flam, 1996, p. 34-37). He explained in the interview, if the future exists 'it is the obsolete in reverse' (Lippard, 2001, p. 90). Smithson brought Kubler's notion of actuality to his research on Renaissance perspective (which included his experiments using cut-up (collage)) and his studies in iconography. This is fundamental in *The Spiral Jetty* film and multiple artwork. In his paper, *Quasi-infinities and the Waning of Space*, published in 1966 in *Arts Magazine*, Smithson quoted Kubler's statement, 'beginnings and endings are projected into the present as hazy planes of "actuality"' (Flam, 1996, p. 34). Kubler's definition of actuality (the state of existing in reality) is 'the void between events' (Flam, 1996, p. 34). In harmony with Smithson's position on temporality and the material landscape, Massey theorised space and material site as made up of multiplicities of trajectories and as such is never finished, never closed. (2015, p. 9).

The scenes while driving to and from the site, of the view ahead and the dust behind, document the site while dispersing it, acknowledging the present time as unobtainable, in accord with Kubler's notion of actuality (Flam, 1996, p. 34). The playful inversions and recursive scenes, the 'double path' both 'present and absent at the same time' of the site and non-site, present the landscape as uncertain (Flam, 1996, p. 153). The chiasmic procedure of these scenes highlights the non-site quality of the multiple artwork where the outer edges, fringes, and centre, 'subvert each other, cancel each other out. There is a suspension of destination' (Smithson quoted in Lippard, 2001, p. 89) the (becoming) path becoming the destination.

Sounds

The film's initial investigation of cartography's fundamentals alternates with three scenes of driving. The viewer is shown torn book pages in a quarry, the surface of maps, a stack of books on a mirror. Sounds denote time and tide-based functionality. The demand valve is heard, then the metronome, clock, radiation counter, and Smithson narrates. The sound of the demand valve will return in Part 3 and there is a connection to Masumi's theorising on threat and

imagination's corporeal dimension (affect) marking our future experience (C.4).⁷² The sound of the demand valve is associated with the intimate (vulnerable) process of breathing, a process of contraction and expansion, that emphasises uncertainty and Smithson's sense of scale, encompassing the infinitely large and small (C.2).

Museum

There is a cut from the fourth scene of driving, the second view behind of raised dust, followed by views in the Dinosaur Hall in the Museum of Natural History, in New York. In the museum machine music is heard. Here the camera pans in a spiral manner, and a clockwise direction with tightening arcs and increasingly close views and a red filter was used.⁷³ Reflections in the glass cases and in museum windows acknowledge the image frame and the film as an image. In addition, the filmmaker is reflected and returns the gaze. This strategy, in effect, catching the viewer looking, reminds the viewer of their observing role (Russell, 1999, p. 163).

The museum views cut to the fifth and final view of driving followed by views of surfaces of maps until there is a cut to a quad map and a panning view of the route to his site.⁷⁴ Here Smithson invoked cartography's grid by reading the site coordinates, which denote a section of the lake's shore in what is paradoxically termed, the meandering zone.

2. Construction

10 min

40 scenes

Scale/duration

There is a section of footage showing Smithson in waders staking out the spiral form, and he looks towards the viewer. This is followed by downwards, fixed frame views of water alternating with (tracking) views of construction. The views of construction increase in duration to make up more than two thirds of this part of the film.

By juxtaposing the sound of the water and its gentle movement through the image frame with the roaring machinery, he brings scale/duration into his (playful) equation (Massey's space/time).

⁷² As highlighted by the Covid-19 pandemic when there was an initial shortage of ventilator machines. Some ventilator machines use a demand valve.

⁷³ The water in The Great Salt Lake is a red colour due to micro bacteria in the brine (Flam, 1996, p. 143).

⁷⁴ A quad map is a type of topographic map that is partitioned by cartography's grid, its lines of latitude and longitude, and published by the United States Geological Survey (USGS).

Smithson referenced evolution by including two still images, one each of a dinosaur and a lizard.⁷⁵ Although molecular spiral structures of the salt are small (in scale) the brine will prevail against the large (in scale) machinery and ultimately against the even larger spiral structure.⁷⁶ However, salt will also blur the boundaries of the structure (as scale) destabilising the scale in terms of size, dispersing the jetty into the landscape by connecting to the structure at dislocation points.



Figure 12. Digital still from *The Spiral Jetty* film (1972) by Robert Smithson showing the heavy equipment used to construct the jetty.

The salt crystals that form around the rocks have fractal structures yet the jetty itself is approximate and roughly made. His intervention in the landscape points to the artist while positioning the work within the landscape. In harmony with Smithson's proposal Ingold explains, 'the ground has a fractal quality'. Although different scales of observation 'will reveal different patterns, textures and grains. Whatever the scale of observation we adopt, however, it is liable to appear just as puckered, mottled and polymorphic' (2015, p. 42 - 43).

3. Structure

12 min 38s

21 scenes

This part plays on a tension between the views of road in Part One, and the views of the jetty. The camera fixed within a helicopter instead of a moving car or truck, adds distance to the vertical dimension shown in the image while filming the downwards view. Similarly to the initial

⁷⁵ According with contemporary understandings of evolution. This is suggestive of the exploration of the concepts and the temporal dimension in Deleuze where he theorised concepts to be always changing and becoming ((Braidotti et al., 2012).

⁷⁶ He referenced the many meanings of salt in *The Spiral Jetty* text (Flam, 1996, p. 147).

views of the road, the structure runs down through the image, defamiliarising and bringing the frame and surface plane of the image into view. Self-referential strategies remind the viewer of the process of filming and viewing. For example, views include the helicopter window frame, the shadow of the helicopter makes two appearances, and the viewer is shown reflections of the filmmaker in the helicopter's window glass. The space the viewer inhabits, and the filmic space are shown to be a dispersed space(s), precluding passive consumption. Smithson returns the viewer to Kubler's notion of actuality (the void between events) affording the viewer agency in the work (Flam, 1996, p. 34) (C.2, p, xx). There is a 'suspension of destination', and the viewer imagines the real in the world (Smithson quoted in Lippard, 2001, p, 89). The present time is unavailable, unobtainable, in the sense of Smithson. In the film the jetty itself is shown to be in the present time complicating the final form in this work. The jetty as unobtainable cannot offer a destination (when destination is thought of as location). The film presents a conceptualisation of monumentality correlative with structural film's self-referentiality highlighting process (the present time is the process of becoming, Kubler's void) and material, in the context of his site and the landscape more generally.⁷⁷

There is another increase in altitude when the focal point is reached as the helicopter moves physically upwards. The view widens and the viewer is shown the spiral structure. Here Smithson offers a reveal (of the spiral structure) and this is a device used in narrative cinema to engage the viewer. However, the reveal of the structure leads to a view of rocks followed by a sequence of still black and white images of close views of the salt encrusted rocks. The sound of the demand valve returns while Smithson's voice is heard again, now explaining the spiral structure of a salt crystal. Smithson observed in his writing on Central Park, 'certain still photographs are related to the dialectics of film'. He further observed that a photograph in an exhibition of Olmsted's art at the Whitney Museum of American Art, 'has a rawness of an instant out of the continuous growth and construction of the park'. Smithson explained, it 'indicates a break in continuity that serves to reinforce a sense of transformation' (Flam, 1996, p. 160). The focal point of the spiral is clearly not the destination in his artwork. The viewer is shown twelve still images and one moving image (8s) in this sequence. In these images Smithson refers to the

⁷⁷ Smithson is present in this work. He shows the film is a path and gave his personal scale to the structure drawing it while walking on it. (Denoting frames as Thater observed.) (C.1). Drawing is a form of passage between nothing and something, a coming into presence and he discussed his 'limits' in a bodily sense in *The Spiral Jetty* text. For example he seemingly comes near to experiencing sunstroke (Flam, 1996, p. 147-148). Although this is paradoxical, Smithson's multiple work is his move towards a limit but not only in the bodily sense. Nancy, in a discussion on the role of imagination in Kant theorises the sublime as a limit. He observed, 'In the sublime, the imagination qua free play of presentation come into contact with its limit – which is freedom. Or, more exactly, freedom itself is a limit' (2003, p. 238). In this sense Smithson's work, and all the works discussed in Chapter Three, reach towards a limit (C.1).

material practices that produce the site and the film. The film is an image that is made up of frames (still images).



Figure 13. Digital still from *The Spiral Jetty* film (1972) by Robert Smithson showing the spiral structure and the reflected sky.

Measurable steps

In the next scenes, Smithson runs and walks on the jetty structure in the 'measurable steps' that he linked to scale and the 'surd state' in his text, and this is where he is filmed from a helicopter (Flam, 1996, p. 147). The downwards view links his work to his milieu, the war in Vietnam and in the sense of Massey's 'stories-so- far', to newscasts more generally (2015).

The scene is reminiscent of the scene in Chris Marker's film, *La Jetée* (1962) where a figure runs along a jetty. Marker similarly included scenes in the museum in his film and was concerned with the way the meaning of a place can change over time. Smithson gives his personal scale to the structure and links Marker's film about time travel with scale in *The Spiral Jetty*. As he walks back along the jetty path, there is an increase in altitude that facilitates an inversion. The jetty structure is shown in the midst of an image of the reflected sky and reorientated sideways, it becomes the galaxy. The final scene in *The Spiral Jetty* film is in the cutting room and comprises a thirty second view of a black and white photograph of the jetty structure pinned above spiral reels of film, and here he acknowledges and even foregrounds the relationship between the jetty structure and the film. In doing so, he extends the metaphor of path to the film acknowledging the film as a path (C.1).

Conclusion

As a post-minimalist artist Smithson was at odds with the American Modernists in his work and

writing and his multiple artwork documents the spatial environment of his site-as-marker without representing it. While documenting a path implies revealing a destination, the jetty, shown as unobtainable (the present time) cannot offer a destination (when destination is thought of as a location). The tension in this artwork is emphasised by the remote location of the jetty; that it is unavailable in a material way (for walking on) while *The Spiral Jetty* as a multiple, dispersed artwork in various media allows a more available and personal interaction.

Walking draws attention

Lefebvre links art to play and considers art 'transfunctional' (2002, p. 3), and therefore to have, 'many uses and at the same time it is not useful' as Stephen Johnstone explained in the Whitechapel publication *The Everyday*, (2008, p.14). Johnstone's comments correspond with the definition of the prefix 'trans' as 'going beyond' (transcendent) or 'across'. This is in accord with Sol Lewitt's warning that 'Art is not utilitarian'. He explained that taking on this aspect 'weakens its function as art'. Considering scale and larger artworks, LeWitt explained 'domination emphasizes the physical and emotive power of the form at the expense of losing the idea of the piece' (1967). Robert Morris agreed in *Notes on Sculpture, Part 2*:

The quality of intimacy is attached to an object in a fairly direct proportion as its size diminishes in relation to oneself. The quality of publicness is attached in proportion as the size increases in relation to oneself (1967).

For Morris, smaller objects were more intimate and therefore more personal and larger objects (with monumental scale, i.e., larger than human sized) could belong to the public realm as they 'include more terms necessary for their apprehension than objects smaller than the body, namely the literal space in which they exist and the kinaesthetic demands placed upon the body' (1995, p.14). In this case if *The Spiral Jetty* needs to be walked on to be understood then for Morris, it could be a public work, or a monument, rather than an artwork, and so perhaps lacking a connection to intimacy. However, Smithson challenged the concept of a literal space as Morris described it and challenged conceptions of art as an object. As Smithson explained, scale is based on perception and shouldn't be linked with size as this leads to certainty and creation of the art object:

Size determines an object, but scale determines art. A crack in the wall if viewed in terms of scale, not size, could be called the Grand Canyon. A room could be made to take on the immensity of the solar system (Flam, 1996, p. 147).

Morris' triadic scheme presupposes a static space, one that is bounded. Smithson opposed the understanding of space as literal and static and instead presented a concept of space as becoming and he acknowledged the material dimension. The developing notion of the non-site and his research into the American picturesque is shown in the unstable scale of this work

where the close-in is understood within a larger context. In doing so he brings the individual into view and by affording the viewer agency he challenged the notion of public space Morris described.

This leads to a discussion on Joyce Wieland's film, *La raison avant la passion / Reason over Passion*). The notion of the picturesque is key to both works.

Part 2

Joyce Wieland, *La raison avant la passion / Reason over Passion* (1969-1983)
In this title: film, printmaking, soft sculpture

Film: 16mm film, computer generated anagrams, colour and black and white, sound (1969)
Duration: 83:40 minutes

La raison avant la passion documents the landscape at the Eastern seaboard before moving west along Canada's transcontinental roadway. Views of the flag, a language lesson and a political conference are at the centre of the film. Western prairie landscapes and mountains along a section of transcontinental railway make up the third section. The subjective view, in the sense of the picturesque (the close-in, in Atwood) is somehow the destination in the work (C.3). In this work, Wieland complicated a quality of idealism (the sublime in politics) she found in organised politics. To do so, her film takes a chiasmic form and she inscribed a condition of monumentality on a politician.⁷⁸ His political motto (ideology) is extended to the landscape views, in the form of Frampton's anagrams, bringing to mind Lefebvre's proposal that monuments extend a conception of the world to their surroundings (2011, p. 143) (C.2.1). The discussion that follows is on Wieland's affective approach to the political dimension.

Playing at, Dadaism and materialism

Wieland's work puts pressure on the frame, and this approach is shown in the film by cut landscape views and still images, text on the surface plane of the image and repeated glimpses of the new flag.⁷⁹ Inverted images and mirror images refer to structural film's self-referentiality and to the illusion of film. Images of the inverted flag remind the viewer of their observing role.

⁷⁸ Pierre Elliot Trudeau's political motto 'reason before passion' in the form of Frampton's computer-generated anagrams is extended to the context of the landscape. It shown on the surface plane of the image and in this sense, it is imposed on the landscape (through the filmic process). This motto is suggestive of the understanding of space as bounded, Massey's 'billiard ball' understanding of space found in Modernity (2015, p. 72).

⁷⁹ The shock generated by the interrupted chains of ideas and associations in a Dadaist work of art, which Benjamin extended to film, is affective (2008, p. 32). A shock links to the threat of repetition, and this is affective. Massumi's writing on threat shows it to be a non-linear process (Gregg et al., 2010, p. 55) (C.4).

Wieland used flags in her practice more generally and, repurposed as fabric art, the flag can be understood as a feminist object. The flag is an icon, and as a symbol of a nation-state it is traditionally used as a mark in the material landscape. However, in this image it is presented in accordance with structural materialism in film. While it can be understood as marking a space in the material landscape, and the viewer imagines the real, material object (flag) in the world, Wieland's flag points to the artist herself in the sense that it is hand drawn. Drawing is a coming into presence, an emergence from nothing into something. The flag marks a space for herself in the landscape. In this work and in her artwork more generally, the flag functions in opposition to a concept of women where, 'woman is/provides a space for man, but occupies none herself...' (Grosz quoted in Massey, 2015, p. 57) (C2.3).⁸⁰ Her move to destabilise identity is the inverse of Smithson's strategy where he destabilised concepts and in doing so identity is also destabilised and becomes relational.

Wieland's play on meaning defamiliarises to unsettle, and this approach can be seen in her interpretation of the new flag as a symbol of the self.⁸¹ Views of the mirror image of the flag (when the flag is inverted horizontally) brings attention to the asymmetry of the hand-drawn version. The central leaf image in the new flag refers to nature. The contrast between Wieland's image and the (now familiar) symmetrical mass-produced image brings corporeality, and the material landscape more generally, into view. There is a tension between individuality and sociability (denoted by the nation-state) in this work, and this is the artist's double move towards documenting presence in the landscape (the close-in in Atwood) while acknowledging the wilderness (space as an infinitude, the sublime).

Chiastic form

The inverted drawing of the flag foreshadows and mirrors the film's chiasmic form, and this is further shown by Canada's national motto, *from sea to sea*.⁸² In actuality, Wieland filmed an inversion: *to sea, from sea*. Duration is brought into play in the sense that the image is presented in an inverted relationship with the viewer's time of watching. The footage in Part 3 is made up of views of western Canada from a train that were filmed a year before the footage of the east coast that is shown in the Preamble and in Part 1. Part 2, the centre of the chiasmic form and the

⁸⁰ Dispersive practices put pressure on representation and on the frames in this work, the partitions that are thought of in this research as lines (paths) in the sense of Rancière.

⁸¹ The Canadian flag is horizontally symmetrical. Representation requires mimicry, and therefore acceptability, or an acceptable quality. The works show the other side of materiality and interruption to consumption is part of the process of making the work; interruption to the frame, dispersing it to deny its agency.

⁸² There are 16 views of the flag in the 9 min preamble.

point of tension between the two sections of landscape views, is occupied by the footage in which a political conference is documented that was filmed two years after filming first began (K. Elder, 1999, p. 177).⁸³



Figure 14. Digital still from *La raison avant la passion / Reason over Passion* (1969) by Joyce Wieland showing the hand drawn flag.

The frame is a significant strategy in this work. B. Elder observed the image frame 'acts as much as a transitional device as it does a bounding device' (K. Elder, 1999, p. 67). The picturesque postcard view refers to its context, highlighting the arbitrary character of the frame edge in the context of the unbounded landscape. In accord with Atwood's analysis of the picturesque, Wieland's image exploits a tension between an unbounded nature and the containing form. To use a modernist understanding of the frame where the context (the unbounded landscape) is irrelevant, eliminates a tension in her artwork (K. Elder, 1999, p. 67). The landscape's unbounded nature is relevant in Wieland, in the sense of Arendt in that it is relevant in the public space in Canada. Once the image frame is brought into view, using strategies to disperse it and make it transitional, the landscape can be seen to be uncertain, and open-ended.

Quilts reaching out comfort

Wieland had an established art practice in other media and she collaborated with other artists and makers including Frampton, who supplied the anagrams for this film.⁸⁴ In conversation with Frampton she explains she made 'two bilingual quilts in relation to *Reason*

⁸³ In *Smithson*, the centre of the chiasmic form is Kubler's void between events (the unobtainable present time) and this is occupied by views of the moving road and the final views of the jetty structure filmed from a helicopter, (C.3.1). In Wieland's flag shaped filmic image, Part 2, the centre of the chiasmic form, is occupied by views of the flag, the French lesson, and the footage of Trudeau filmed during a political conference.

⁸⁴ Wieland and Frampton worked together on other projects. He played a supporting role as a technician in this film (K. Elder, 1999, p. 176).

over *Passion*', for her exhibition *True Patriot Love* in Ottawa at the National Gallery of Canada in 1971 (K. Elder, 1999, p. 168).⁸⁵ In the same collection of papers Bart Testa comments in *A Movement through Landscape* on Wieland's padded 'soft' plastic surrounds used as picture frames. Here she used quilting as a frame to soften in actually a material frame. In doing so she added comfort to the viewer's position. In Wieland's film, *Sailboat* (1968), she positioned the viewer paradoxically as 'intimate outsider'.⁸⁶ This analysis draws on the Canadian motif 'of human presence and indifferent nature' (K. Elder, 1999, p. 76-78). Testa's assessment of Wieland's quilted frame as soft and as comfort in some way reaching outwards to the viewer, harmonises with B. Elder's notion of the frame as transitional in Wieland's image. For Moyra Davey adding the quilts to the film's title is a riposte to Trudeau (Davey, 2020, p. 208). The form of a quilt, or 'comforter', clearly connotes corporeality in opposition to its title. It is interesting to note that one quilt was shown in Trudeau's official residence when he was Prime Minister, where it was eventually damaged.

In her writing on the 1971 exhibition in the retrospective exhibition catalogue introduced earlier, Lippard explains:

In the *True Patriot Love* exhibition, Wieland did not just collaborate with another artist, but with surrogates for the public she hoped to touch—women from different regions and social sectors of Canada. Like Judy Chicago after her on an even grander scale in the *Dinner Party* project (2001, p. 11).

Wieland pushed boundaries of what can be shown in the gallery space. Wieland's quilts are a presentation of traditional craftwork (woman's work) and a shared making experience (multiplicity). They reach outwards to the viewer and similarly to her padded (quilted) frames, connote intimacy.⁸⁷ She added these works to the film's title and in doing so clarified her position and adjusted her reach, increasing the scale of the work.⁸⁸

The Film

The discussion that follows is on the film in three parts; Part 1 includes a preamble, an introduction to Wieland's personal iconography, then documents the landscape at the Eastern seaboard before moving west along Canada's transcontinental roadway. Part 2 is made up from

⁸⁵ An etching (made from multiple impressions of her mouth) was added to this title in 1969 (K. Elder, 1999, p. 168).

⁸⁶ The popularity of rigid structures (represented by the sailboat) is linked to ways to survive in the wilderness. The image refers to the sublime landscape. When the sailboat disappears, overturns, it seems to have been absorbed by the horizon: the picturesque view of the sea and sky remain. The context of the untamable wild (sublime in nature) is shown in the image's open horizon.

⁸⁷ Wieland engaged practitioners to help produce works, including the quilts, that were shown in her retrospective exhibition in Ottawa, in 1971. For context, Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* was shown in 1979. Tracey Emin's *My Bed* (1998), can be understood in a progression from Wieland's approach, bringing intimacy into the gallery space.

⁸⁸ The phrase that is the title of her retrospective, *true patriot love*, is borrowed from the national anthem.

a section of footage of a French lesson and re-recorded footage of Pierre Elliott Trudeau. Part 3 documents the western prairie landscapes and mountains along a section of transcontinental railway.

1a. Preamble

9 min

Sounds

In the preamble and Part One of this film Wieland uses sounds associated with national pageantry and sounds of the sea. Playful sounds include a band instrument, possibly a tuba, blowing a single note, and a repeated spoken word phrase, using the cadence of the national motto, *A Mare Usque a Mare* (*D'un océan à l'autre* / *From Sea to Sea*).⁸⁹ This section ends with Wieland's silent, affective, rendition of the national anthem.

Fixed Frame Views

5 min of landscape views make up over half the duration of the 9 min preamble. The initial 3 min of landscape views are filmed using a camera fixed in a moving car. This is followed by 2 min filmed from a stationary position, possibly using a tripod. The initial footage of forward views of landscape, with the vehicle not included in the shot, is reversed and repeated. Forward views then alternate with views of the landscape filmed through a side window and move through the frame of the image. In this section there are 16 views of a hand drawn flag, each of only 1s or 4s duration. Halfway through the preamble is the 2 min fixed frame (re-recorded) view of the sea. This footage is inverted vertically and then righted. The playful inversion of a view of water moving through the frame brings the surface plane and the frame of the image into view.

Inversion, self-reflexive, self-referential strategies

The initial views of an (inverted) hand drawn flag and the inverted re-recorded view of water bring the illusion of film into view. They bring in information from outside, other durations of filming and of viewing, widening the context and acknowledging time in external things. This is Bergson's 'radical change' that is key to Massey's argument (2005, p. 24) (C.1, p.xx). Fixed frame views position the gaze as the making of an image. The space the viewer inhabits, and the filmic space seen as a dispersed space(s) precludes consumption (C.2.1). The viewer is invited to question what is known and material in the world in accord with materialism in film (C.2.1).

⁸⁹ George Lellis explains 'a barely audible voice is heard saying something like 'from sea to shining sea' (K. Elder, 1999, p. 57).

The unstable, handheld, quality of the views filmed through the car windows indicate the presence of the filmmaker. Although at times the car window frame can be seen, the vehicle is not usually included in the scenes filmed while driving. When Wieland is reflected in the window her direct outward glances acknowledge the viewer and remind the viewer of their observing role. The inclusion of still photographs throughout this film, allude to the material of the film, the still images, frames, that make up a film (C.1).⁹⁰ This is a durational image, and its long length is a way to defamiliarise. Duration implies a concept and an effect, it does something and is something, holding an idea of time and an effect of time, an excess. The dispersed image delays, and the forward progression of the image is interrupted, complicating the film's final forms.

1b. Documenting Highway 1

28.5 min

Views of flag alternate with moving and still views of the rising and falling landscape. The direction of movement through the image frame alternates. The images are unstable (the camera is hand-held) denoting the presence of the filmmaker. There is a moving forward in time as the scenes filmed while driving in actuality document a time after the conclusion in Part 3.

Recursive Structure, Text

In this Part, Frampton's computer-generated anagrams of Trudeau's motto in the form 'reason over passion' make a playful centre-screen appearance over the cut images of landscape views and still images.⁹¹ Frampton includes a sound, a tone occurring slightly out of phase with the changing anagrams. Although they may seem to change randomly, the movement of the letters along the path of the term harmonises with the recursive nature of the film. Each letter moves along from one side to the opposite side of its term before reversing its path. As the film progresses, Frampton's computer program further complicates the path and the letters ultimately have an individualised journey according to their position in the terms (K. Elder, 1999, p. 187).

⁹⁰ Montage is not used in the practice in its usual sense; post-production is not used. However montage is used in all the works discussed in Chapter Three and in the practice. The thinking is on montage as a movement, a lifting up in the sense of a synthesis, sublation (C.2).

⁹¹ His political motto (ideology) is extended to the landscape views in accordance with Lefebvre's proposal, and a connection with contemplation. There is a drift through the ideas and associations that are offered by the image more generally.

The anagrams present an interpretation of the filmic image, functioning in a performative way, understood in this research in terms of a drawing, while also bringing into view the submerged cinema of experimental film (Rees, 2020, p. 23) (C.1). The anagrams, when considered in terms of Wieland's path or journey, move along a line and draw the film (a length of celluloid) while the individual letters and the cut views of landscape denote frames. The path offered in the film is recursive and this is also shown in Frampton's anagrams. Behind the anagrams the image moves through the frame, keeping the surface plane of the image in view. Reading text is slower than viewing (Rees, 2020, p. 29). Wieland used text in her practice more generally (Russell, 1999, p. 179). The image space is dispersed to the durations of reading and viewing. The filmic space and the space of the viewer are seen to be dispersed space(s).

Duration & Delay

This film requires engagement while paradoxically, interrupting chains of associations and ideas. Viewers note that 'boredom is allowed to remain in the work' (Lellis quoted in K. Elder, 1999, p. 60) Wieland investigated the tension between viewing and thinking in a way suggestive of Warhol's work, affording an essential element of drift, freeing thought to space/time. The film's recursivity may seem to support nostalgia for the initial more stable views. Wieland agreed the film is nostalgic, however this is due to actual changes to the landscape (Thomson et al., 2017, p. 40). In this film, she was not documenting a continent as a place. Her interest was in what constitutes a nation-state more generally and in identity, shown as constituted within the relational in this work (Thomson et al., 2017, p. 128).

2. Conference

13.5 min

This film does not offer a narrative to the viewer as found within a travelogue or the road movie genre, for example exploring a journey of self-discovery or depicting a flight from danger. Instead, the centre of this film's recursive form, the space between two landscape phrases in the chiasmic form, is occupied by footage of the flag, a French lesson, and views of Trudeau at a political conference. The footage is re-recorded and points to other durations, times of viewing and filming, and other contexts. Shapiro's observation on Smithson's practice was introduced earlier in this Chapter. He explained '...the monument is a public work of art. One that is meant to focus a general attention on whatever it is that is vital to the way in which a community understands itself' (1995, p. 22-23). The film inscribes a condition of monumentality on this politician in the sense that it complicated his political ideology. The experience of the film can be

understood in the context of Wieland's manifestation of the picturesque landscape. The landscape is documented as it is understood in Canada, the community to which this film refers.

Wieland's silent rendition of the national anthem in the preamble is indicative of presence and the dimension of sound. She is shown mouthing the words, while clearly forgetting some. The physicality and vulnerability of the filmmaker, and the intimate physicality of the absent sounds, are brought into view by the silenced image.⁹² Viewers imagine the real and material in the world. This is an uncomfortable image and foreshadows the French lesson during which children are voiced by adults, in Part 2. These scenes complicate the notion of distribution to which Trudeau's ideology referred and positions his motto in a material relation to a culture, and to a concept of distribution in the sense of Rancière. When the anagrams are first shown they are further complicated by the sound of re-recording, the tone that sounds at irregular intervals and, in Part 3, an episode of machine music. Wieland's destabilising of identity, her moving viewpoint, puts pressure on the frames to unsettle Trudeau's ideology and in this sense this work is errant. The works show the other side of materiality and interruption to consumption is part of the process of making the work; interruption to the frame, dispersing it to deny its agency. The image draws a dispersed line, and subjectivity becomes more and more displaced as a consequence, affording new ideas.⁹³

Monumentality

While this film extends Trudeau's motto onto the landscape views in the form of anagrams, Russell cautions that structural film is anti-interventionist and not a vehicle for political content. Although Wieland's subversive treatment of a Quebecois politician in *Pierre Vallières* (1972) is within structural film practice for Russell, it is 'impure' (1999, p. 178). In this later image, Wieland used a fixed camera position, a close view of Vallières' mouth, to document his political ideology in the context of his sensuality, culture, and social class. In her earlier film, she likewise positioned corporeality at the centre and here a re-recorded image of another politician is a sequence of lingering close views. Her fixed image frame brings the physical, corporeal dimension into view. For Lellis the film 'plays with his physiognomy, flickering it, stopping it, juggling it around, and molding it...'. Trudeau looks gratified, satisfied in the images and while he is portrayed as 'between the phenomenal and the symbolic' the image alludes to Trudeau's 'role as an icon in Canada' (K. Elder, 1999, p. 59). The viewer imagines the real in the world, the film

⁹² This is suggestive of Warhol's durational film *Sleep* (1964) where sitting and watching another body sleeping brings one's own body into view.

⁹³ In this way this work is errant. It interrupts the mimetic quality afforded by the filmic image; the acceptable quality representation requires.

positions the man along with his image, and the extent to which his image was produced by the media is acknowledged.⁹⁴

Bordering on boundaries

Wieland re-purposed the delay of travel documenting an actual journey, and *La raison avant la passion* takes a diaristic form. Akerman's practice encompasses diaristic film, exemplified by *D'Est Bordering on Fiction*, although it was made later, in 1993. In this film, Akerman presented the inversion of Wieland's strategy, her film moves ever eastward while her views of people document the landscape.⁹⁵ Akerman's film documents the results of politics (Russell, 1999, p. 168); the political and geographical borders; the border between the landscape and the people inhabiting the landscape; the border (frame) of the image, and as the title suggests considers the actuality of national politics and identity (as mutable) (C.4). To a similar end, the central footage in Wieland's film is suggestive of subjectivity, identity, and organised politics in an interrogation of what constitutes a nation-state. Cut images of landscape are placed in a relationship with the nationalism that is represented by Trudeau's motto. The context of the road is recoded, and the shot's constraints act as a device to unsettle and defamiliarise. Akerman's images flow through the frame dispersing the image space and examining boundaries and borders. Aside from the images of Trudeau, which can be understood as a portrait, Wieland's film presents cut landscape views. However, both films are investigative of the political dimension and supportive of the iterative process to which Derrida's notion *différance* refers (C.2.2).

3. The Train and the Rocky Mountains

30 min

Destination

In Part 3, cut scenes and still images of wintery mountainous landscape views lead to the ultimate view of a postcard and the anticipated touristic images of the western seaboard are not shown. Wieland's path does not reach the sea and instead it ends with a still image of a postcard, a photographic object, a frame within a frame. The postcard is a material iteration of a photographic image, or a film frame. In this sense the destination is shown to be the film itself in accord with structural film and materialism in film. The film's final form positions the viewer in a

⁹⁴ Marshall McLuhan more generally as a communication and media scholar, brings the image and media manipulation into view at this time.

⁹⁵ Russell explains, film and video is a 'dispersal of representation, subjectivity, experience and cultural history'. In diary filmmaking 'the gaps between these layers and temporality are foregrounded' (1999, p. xiv). Chantal Ackerman's diaristic moving image practice is an allegory of reality for Russell (1999, p. 169).

relationship with the material world. The viewer is reminded of the illusion and of the material and processes of filmmaking. The postcard image extends the figure of path; *from sea to sea* is extended (to include the sea). The image shown is suggestive of industrialisation and pollution, and these concerns are within the broader contemporary discussion on the landscape. In relation to this, the postcard is an object, an image placed within the politics of the reproduction, a form used in Correspondence Art. As such it refers to distribution and consumption and is a critique of Trudeau's ideology, within the debate on his policies. While Trudeau's intention is to be supportive in response to issues of inequality raised by Quebec, as Wieland also is, the emphasis in this work is on his seemingly distributive bilingual policy. She brings into view the move to 'distribute' a culture, in the context of the nation-state as a distributive space more generally. However, the film's final form is complicated. The final image is an image that doubles, and in this sense the landscape is alluded to in its infinitude and reach towards the sublime.



Figure 15. Digital still from *La raison avant la passion / Reason over Passion* (1969) by Joyce Wieland showing the postcard image.

Conclusion

As a post-Dadaist artist Wieland was in opposition to the '1950s institutionalisation of modern art' (Rees, 2017, p. 67). For her, Dadaist artworks '...are artistic in a *general* way ... they see things whole. Their jokes are about life' (Lippard quoted in Wieland, 1987, p. 1-2). The overall political effect is a position on identity that is in opposition to any place-centric reading of the nation-state such as is exemplified in the film by Trudeau's motto. Her move to destabilise identity is the inverse of Smithson's strategy where he destabilised concepts and in doing so identity is also destabilised as relational and becoming (C.3.1).⁹⁶ This film does not reach a

⁹⁶ In his analysis of Foucault, Deleuze shows concepts are mutable (Deleuze et al., 2016).

destination and its recursivity and chiastic form is suggestive of Massey's argument that identity is central to the political (2015, p. 56-58). The still image of a postcard, a frame within a transitional frame, is a key to Wieland's practice, more generally. The tension between the bounded space of the image and the unbounded landscape is a significant strategy in this film. The picturesque implies uncertainty, instability. The landscape, figured as picturesque, destabilises the frame, (the image, the monument and the path) dispersing it as links to subjectivity and movement.

This leads to the discussion on Sophie Calle's *Double Blind / No Sex Last Night* (1996). Wieland documented the landscape when travelling and Calle likewise re-purposed the delay of travel in this video work. She used a distinctly diaristic procedure and a chiastic form to present a juxtaposition of structural film strategies and narrative cinema. In her conceptual art practice Calle derives constraints that include other people and while she is the agent, their stories guide her. She documented her journey while travelling from New York to California (in 1993) with a second filmmaker and he is included in this work.⁹⁷

Part 3

Sophie Calle, *Double Blind / No Sex Last Night* (1996)
Video: Analogue video, text, colour and sound
Duration: 75 minutes

Sophie Calle (SC) staged an intimate journey moving southwest across America, from New York to San Francisco. Travelling with Greg Shepherd (GS) she documented a transcontinental path and the landscape along the highways and roadways of America. An old Cadillac plays a role as a rival; the car parallels the relationship, and its breakdowns require attention and time.

In the preamble of *Double Blind* (1996), Calle explains that while she plans to marry her companion in Las Vegas, she also plans to fall in love. Aligning a daydream (falling in love) with a location (marriage in Las Vegas) is paradoxical and suggests that Calle set out to investigate a social structure (marriage) in terms of a path (the drive to Las Vegas) and subjectivity in terms of a specific daydream, falling in love. The encounter with the monument, a drive-up window for weddings, is documented as a destination and in this sense, it is a final form in the video. However, Burgin tells us that a daydream is an open-ended way of thinking and where you end up is different each time as 'chains of associations take you away from your goal' (2020, p, 142).

⁹⁷ She used a way of working that harmonises with the French literary movement known as OuLiPo where constraints are derived from word play. This way of working is used by, for example, the theorist, Georges Perec.

The discussion that follows is on the ways in which the final form is complicated in this work.

Daydream as a destination

In her photograph and text work *Room with a View / Chambre Avec Vue* (2002). Calle documented one night in the Eiffel Tower as a site of stories; strangers read stories to her. Barthes suggests the tower can be thought of as a line, and this way connects the tower to path, albeit a vertical one.⁹⁸ He explains, it functions in two ways, 'seeing and being seen' and it is 'present to the entire world' as a symbol of Paris and of France (1997, p. 3).⁹⁹ Thought of this way, the tower accords with the path's language of availability and its collective nature (as a social structure). In contrast, Calle's artwork *Room with a View* documents the monument in a relational way in accord with Massey's theorising of space as stories-so-far. Calle complicated the tower's final forms in the sense of the daydream's iterative process.

In her video she likewise documented a path, and a conception of the nation-state, as trajectories or space/time. A drive-up window for weddings marks the path in terms of Lefebvre's proposal that the monument extends a concept to the landscape. In this sense she complicated a monument and positioned the viewer in a material relation to her image. She investigated identity in her practice more generally and in this video acknowledged distance (from her companion, from her family, her friend, love) in ways investigative of agency. To do so presence is shown using temporalities, a drift through the landscape, the cut caused by her changing roles.

This video is in three parts. While the exaggerated image frame in the Preamble and Conclusion, denote a chiasmic form, the centre is occupied by the diaristic middle section, made up of 15 days. Two filmmakers Sophie Calle (SC) and Greg Shepherd (GS) contribute images and narrate, and each day is denoted by a still image of a motel bed. Shklovsky connected jumps in meaning between metaphoric concepts in images, to poetry (Rees, 2017, p. 34). While this video uses structural film strategies, exemplified by the still image of a motel bed, narrative forms are also included. Rees observed, 'the continuous flow of images ... the basis of illusionism in film, is in contrast to the equal power of film editing to enforce breaks' (2017, p. 34). While at

⁹⁸ Lefebvre admired Gustave Eiffel in his search for weightlessness in architecture, a progression from the overarching importance attached to visual space (2011, p. 146).

⁹⁹ Barthes' theorising links the Eiffel Tower to social structures and in this way to distribution. Wieland's image is investigative of Trudeau's motto which takes a similar position on the nation-state in the sense of Rancière's term, partager. There are multiple copies of the tower including one in Las Vegas and this is discussed in Chapter Four. While it is interesting to consider Warhol's film *Empire State Building* where he documents duration, in this context the material structure seems to play a different role, perhaps because it was not built for a world exhibition as was the Eiffel Tower.

times the landscape is used in pathetic fallacy to represent emotion, a strategy used in narrative cinema's continuous flow, there is a sensitivity to boundaries in this work that positions the viewer as observer.

1. Preamble

5 min

The 5-minute (min) preamble includes 3 min of fixed frame views. The initial 2 min are scenes of a redacted image, a letterbox view of a journey probably from Paris to New York. Here she dedicates the artwork to a friend and introduces Greg Shepherd (GS) explaining how they met and that they will marry in Las Vegas before continuing to San Francisco.¹⁰⁰ This is followed by a series of still images showing the start of a journey.

The preamble is a key to this work. The constraints frame the practice in the sense of an ideological path. She introduces GS while offering some possible beginnings, moving back in time, for example, the previous year in France, or the year before that in New York. In her introduction the years pass by, seasons drift.¹⁰¹ When Calle narrates in French, English subtitles bring the surface plane of the image in view. Date and time are captured by the video camera, and sometimes shown. Behind the text, the image moves through the frame, keeping the surface plane of the image in view. The filmic space and the space of the viewer are seen to be dispersed space(s). Reading text is slower than viewing (Rees, 2020, p. 29). Attention is dispersed between viewing, listening and reading.

Calle initially explains that she is in New York to start anew and in this sense her transcontinental path is positioned as a journey with a destination, one moving towards a new beginning. However, it is one that seems half-hearted on the part of GS, and frequently stalled by the car, adding uncertainty and keeping duration and other contexts in view. There is a quality of fantasy, and the introductory narration refers to the time preceding the video when SC and GS write to each other and fail to connect. This thread continues through the video with GS's letter-writing linking the video to other durations and stories-so-far (Massey). SC and GS first drive to a jetty where Calle drops flowers in the sea. This is a possible reference to the final scene in Marker's *La Jetée* (1962). Marker's film explores temporality in the contexts of memory and complicates a narrative by dispersing it through time. While Calle may seem to be exploring temporality in this

¹⁰⁰ She dedicates the film to Herve Guibert who died in 1991

¹⁰¹ This is suggestive of photography's quality of latency (Davey, 2020).

sense, her path is documented as space/time. Her iterative process is suggestive of Derrida's notion of *différance*, his conceptual structure of space/spacing that Massey highlighted and is key to this research (C.2.2). In *Double Blind* the delay of travel through a material space is highlighted while time in external things is acknowledged in the sense of Bergson in Massey (2015, p. 24). The re-iterated declaration, *no sex last night* and view of a motel bed plays on Warhol's strategy in *Sleep* (1964) to affectively mark each day and in doing so the video brings corporeality and delay in the sense of space/time into view.¹⁰²



Figure 16. Digital video still from *Double Blind / No Sex Last Night* (1996) by Sophie Calle showing the still image of the motel bed.

2. New York to Las Vegas

This part is made up of fifteen days and although this section takes a diaristic form, the video presents a familiar (cinematic) experience of romance. SC and GS argue; share ideas and activities (a movie, a visit with friends). However, the overarching experience of this section of the video is iteration. Duration is brought into view by delay and repetition. However, once the monument is encountered the video resumes a narrative form until in Part 3 the viewer is again shown a letterbox view, and this time a view of the moving road.

Diaristic filmmaking

Double Blind is in some ways a video progression from Akerman's position in *News from Home* (1976) where in her film the image stays 'relentlessly in the present time' (Russell, 1999, p. 169) (C.2.3). In this section of Calle's video, the viewing position is dispersed to two filmmakers.

¹⁰² Tracy Emin's work, *The Bed* made two years later, in 1998, was shown at the Tate in 1999.

However, once SC and GS confront the monument its political context is dislocated. It is shown to be redirected when outside of Las Vegas, SC and GS discuss how the symbol (wedding) changed the political balance of the relationship. This seems to be a closure, and the video soon resumes the narrative form first presented in Part 1 of the video.

3. Conclusion of film

5min 13s

The inverted narratives in Part 1 and 3 support this video's chiasmic form. Part 3 is the closing phrase. A white wedding is staged in Paris, and there is a return to California although this time to divorce. The letterbox frame showing a redacted image returns with a view of the moving road. While the monument is somehow the destination, in this work the drive-up window for weddings marks an experience, falling in love. The destination, falling in love as an experience in the sense of a dimension of the path as a journey, is shown to be unavailable and still being made. In support of this, the closing statements refer to the practice constraints and complicate the final forms in this work by questioning the truth of what the viewer has been shown.

Discussion

The path

In the video *Double Blind* an existing material path was documented as stories-so-far. The chiasmic form and diaristic process discussed in Part 2, New York to Las Vegas, supports a proposal that the path is a relational one in the sense of her work in the Eiffel Tower. Although this video aligns a daydream (falling in love) with a location (marriage in Las Vegas) the destination is shown to be unavailable in the sense that identity is mutable. The illusory quality of the image is brought into view complicating the work's final form. Her encounter with the monument questions truth in an affective confrontation that results in the monument's conceptual dispersal.

Chapter Conclusion

The discussion in this Chapter is between two registers, the material dimension and the landscape as a becoming. While in each work an actual transcontinental structure is documented as a frame, the landscape is presented as a (re-purposed) journey. While they are interrogative of context and agency, these are very personal images in the way the body is positioned in the landscape, reliant on the form of path that is presented, and the conception of monumentality found in the sites. In each work discussed in this Chapter, the monument extends

a specific meaning to the landscape. However, the works support subjectification, in opposition to the formulation of monumentality they find in their sites. The viewer is required to continually reassess their position in relation to the image and the material world, in the sense of Gidal and Le Grice's discussion on structural materialism in film (C.2). While Wieland inscribed monumentality onto a politician, Smithson appended his path to a nearby monument destabilising it. Calle confronted the monument, and in doing so added uncertainty, dislocating the symbol and dispersing it. The ways in which the political effects were treated complicated the final forms and show destination in the sense of the present time, to be unavailable, unobtainable in Smithson as 'the void between events' (Flam, 1996, p. 34).

The dispersed forms in these works show their iterative quality, meaning is pushed up the path deferred, and this is also shown in the practice discussed next in Chapter Four. There is a question of stability, certainty. All the works discussed in this research offer a material position (the path as a frame). Although it may seem paradoxical to impose a frame (a structure) and disperse it, this brings into view existing structures. In these works, identity and the landscape become key and there is a sensitivity to boundaries.

Chapter Four¹⁰³

Part 1

1. *we all look at the same sky* (2019)
Digital video
Duration: 3 min 25s

Site 1: Speaker's Corner, Hyde Park

2. *water drawing* (2019)
Digital video
Duration: 5 min

Site 2: Parliament Hill and Fields, Hampstead Heath

Part 2

The sky is taught by falling (2023)
Digital video, 35 mm photography, graphite drawing
Duration: 15 min 4s

Site 3: Parkland Walk, North London

The practice documents site-as-marker using an upwards view to video the walking path. The discussion in this Chapter is on the ways in which the material path in each site is documented while its contingent (transitional) dimension as a frame is also shown.

This research asks: what are the ways in which strategies of dispersal contribute to the image space and the frame, considering the thinking around the frame as a conceptual device and how it is viewed?

The discussion in Part 1.1 is on a video documenting Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park. This is a free speech area in a corner of the park, a popular urban green space. While the grassy areas in summer offer spaces for thoughtful repose, Speakers use a section of path that is full of movement. Bicycle traffic speeds through while those on foot dodge over the bike lanes to reach the pedestrian crossing and Marble Arch underground station.¹⁰⁴ The practice alludes to

¹⁰³ The practice is shown in the accompanying document Overview of Practice.

¹⁰⁴ Interest was first caught by the juxtaposition of free speech and bicycle lanes and how they are viewed as these activities seem to be afforded a similar level of support (protection) in law. In a progression from England, the common law system is used in Canada with the province of Quebec forming the exception. In this province constitutional law is used and marks Quebec's historical cut from France.

verticality's connection to attention and to the unfixed nature of the landscape. Attention in terms of register (scale/duration) is key to the scene when Speakers are present in this site, and when someone steps upwards people attend.¹⁰⁵ In the practice this site is documented on a clear cold day in winter.¹⁰⁶ Areas of lawn were fenced for re-seeding and pedestrians were restricted to paths. The contingent quality of the landscape more generally is kept in view by the presence of an unstable grid of contrail residue that is a feature of this site. In the sense that the residue of passing flights denote paths and stories elsewhere, the contrails show the site to have indeterminate boundaries. The London plane trees (also documented in the video) reach upwards towards the potentially infinite dimension of sky and space. In the context of the bright sky and the glittering light of that day, the tree branches dark and distinctly non-geometrical shapes, denote a refusal of the overarching abstraction represented by the vapourish white grid. Without their seasonal array of leaves, the branches are experienced by the walker in their natural habit of resting in winter and the rhythmic longevity that is the trees' own scale/duration is brought into view.¹⁰⁷ In their material presence, their rootedness, and seemingly unorganised forms, the experience offered by the dispersed video image of trees (in the contexts of the sky, the sun's light, and the landscape more generally) is paradoxically durational while showing a dimension of liveness that is also gestural. While the practice does not record the individuals who speak, affects and durations of this site are acknowledged in the video image in the context of Massey's notion of space/time (C.1). The image calls attention to itself and the experience of the material landscape is shown in the context of the walk (C.1).

The second site discussed in Part 1.2, Parliament Hill, was for many years known locally as Kite Hill, a space for play affording an upwards lift. In this context the destination in this site is somewhere above the earthly ground. The name Kite Hill made its way into maps of this area, including an early version of Google maps. The hilltop was not usually marked in the ubiquitous A to Z map books of London or in the also popular Collins map books of London. There is an obvious discord between actuality and representation, and it is interesting to note that while this

¹⁰⁵ Traditionally onto a soapbox but now stepladders and other objects are used.

¹⁰⁶ In the practice the camera is positioned in a container and it videos through a layer of water to document the upwards view. In Sites 1 and 3 the water maps the movement of walking onto the surface plane of the video image. In Site 2 the container is placed on the ground and the water maps the movements of the container as it is moved in contact with the earthly ground.

¹⁰⁷ London plane trees line the earthly paths in this site. Their presence alludes to a dimension of earthly rootedness (denoting the necessarily embedded material practices Massey emphasised) and the essential vertical movements that are constraints in this site. D. W. Smith explains, in Kant for the imagination to carry out the act of synthesis (the movement to which Arendt referred) a unit of measure is needed, and this is found 'primarily in the human body'. For example, a tree can be understood to be as tall as ten people. The tree can then be in turn used to measure larger structures, mountains in Kant (2004, p. xvii). When thought of this way the trees own scale is also brought into view in terms of the weather and duration and a reaching toward (while not reaching) sublimity, and this is alluded to in the video work in relation to the upwards view and sky as open-ended.

site is visited by those who live locally, it also increasingly attracts those from elsewhere. Now, in maps relying on satellite technology (and therefore reliant on the grid used in mapping) all paths are represented, and the hill's summit is marked as a viewpoint destination. In this video the container is on the ground and the camera's initial position when videoing the upwards view through clear water is ambiguous. The sky seems to rest on the ground. This video image is structured by the rhythm and movement of tapping and the contact between the container and the ground is documented in the video. Light is reflected away from the camera lens, and the movement is shown as dark graphic shapes. These are shown as distortions and folds in the image that interrupt the video image of sky.

When visited, verge plants block the view along the main path to the hilltop until there is a cut through which a distant view of London is revealed. The view becomes an experience of a position. Recently a sort of lay-by for walkers has been added beside the path, with an illustration explaining the view, and more benches have appeared, scattered over the summit of the hill. The path to the hilltop continues on relentlessly, ignoring the destination implied by the sign and benches, drawing the walker down the hill again, implying linearity. However, this site offers another path that runs on the Parliament Fields side of the hedgerow with a more open view towards London and benches at regular intervals. While presence is shown in the image, its process and rhythms allude to an attribute of experimental film that Rees denoted a 'submerged cinema' (2020, p. 23).¹⁰⁸ However the site is documented in accord with the experience afforded by the material landscape, and presence is shown as a play in perspective, the experiences of viewpoint and positioning complicating its final form.

In Part 2, a walking video documents the third site, a re-purposed railroad embankment that is now a footpath, slanting up through the rolling landscape between Finsbury Park Station and Alexandra Palace.¹⁰⁹ While the footpath was once neglected as a marginal space, now care is being brought to this site's landscapes of self-seeded trees and other verge plants. Although the trees bring an undisciplined quality of the landscape into view, the path is an engineered line constrained by the neighbourhoods that border it and by the relics of the railway. At halfway,

¹⁰⁸ Self-referential strategies present an interpretation of the filmic image implicating viewing and presence, and this can be understood along with of the 'submerged cinema' of repetition and sequences characteristic to experimental film (Rees, 2020, p. 23) This is acknowledged in relation to Deleuze and Guattari's theory of the diagram, discussed in Chapter One.

¹⁰⁹ The view from Alexandra Palace is towards London and this monument was where in 1882, Cecil Shadbolt used a balloon to gain additional height and produced what is possibly the first successful vertical photograph. This site holds a communications tower and is supportive of communication practices more generally; it initially hosted a BBC radio station and then an early BBC television studio.

where Highgate Woods were bypassed by the tracks going underground, a vault (a void) marks the footpath unavailable. The walker is released to other paths or modes of travel until, past the woods, the footpath can be taken up again. Although this path is in some sections experienced as a line, the walker moves over or under multiple road bridges (voids) and these are supportive of entrances and exits to other paths, some left by the railway, others are made ad hoc. This brings into view the site as a landscape of indeterminate boundaries. While the constrained width of the path brings an affective proximity into view, this site exists in its original connection with the Victorian World Exhibitions and to other such sites.¹¹⁰ In this sense this landscape can also be understood as multiple sites, acknowledging its historical structuring, and as such facilitates an examination of site(s).

The path plays a role as a frame in the works discussed in this research and this is where the political effects can be found. The path is not represented (Lefebvre, 2014, p. 742). Instead, the path in its role as a social structure is recognised as a structure that organises groups of people and affects decision-making. Dispersive practices put pressure on the frame and its subjective dimension is also shown insofar as the strategies of dispersal used in the artworks afford the viewer agency. This quality is key, and the discussion in this Chapter is on the uncertain balance between the subjective view and the structures that are documented in each work.

Part 1

1. *we all look at the same sky* (2019)
Digital video
Duration: 3 min 25s

Site 1: Speaker's Corner, Hyde Park

While this site supports sociability more generally in its role as a park, it is a space where the personal becomes relevant¹¹¹. This area of Hyde Park is a monument to free speech and the site-as-marker exists in the affective balance between individuality and sociability (Massey,

¹¹⁰ Victorian idealism is a connecting thread between this and many such sites in London and worldwide, exemplified by the V&A Museum and this museum's collection and the remaining fragments of Crystal Palace, as these are artifacts of the first Great Exhibition held in Hyde Park. Alexandra Palace is also one such monument and represents a later iteration of Victorian idealism with a more developed focus on community education. Another such monument is the Eiffel Tower built in Paris for a World exhibition. During a hot locked down summer, a meme by *We Are The Virus* circulated (Kholam, 2020). The restrictions on travel resulted in quieter skies and reduced air pollution, vapour trails called 'scars' diminished. The quieter, cleaner sky was admired. Attention drawn upwards, Londoners conflated the clearly visible communication tower at Crystal Palace, in South London, with the Paris monument. The London tower becoming through the experience of this meme, in some way also the Eiffel Tower.

¹¹¹ The works discussed in this research by Smithson, Wieland, and Calle engage with the personal, that which Hannah Arendt explains is irrelevant in relation to the public realm in her book *The Human Condition* (1998, p. 71). To do so, they offer forms that are recursive, vertiginous, and open-ended.

2015, p. 188). Speakers take position(s) on a section of the path.¹¹² While the subjective view is somehow the destination, the site affords agency to the individual.

While documentary practice does encompass narrative forms the works resist the linearity that can structure narrative works. The process of materialism in film that Gidal outlined, discussed in Chapter Two, results in an 'anti-documentary tension' (2016, p. 82). Warhol's work resists linearity in the sense that it complicated the notion of a final form and this quality of materiality is shown in the dispersed form of the videos as they document presence and the landscape. A narrative structure can be thought of in terms of the path, which is a structure, a frame in the work, that organises groups of people and affects decision making. The sense of destination inherent to the path is a quality that it shares with a narrative work in so far as a conclusion can be understood in terms of a destination and this is a final form. The focus that is afforded by a perspective view is in this sense, also a destination.¹¹³ The video, *we all look at the same sky* complicates narrative's conclusion and perspective's focus, and the destination of the path documented in my video is presented as unavailable, unobtainable in the sense of Smithson (C.3.1).¹¹⁴

My walking path

While the image of the self is not included in the videos these are very personal images. Presence is dispersed in the work and the viewer is also afforded agency opening the possibility of political debate (C.1). The videos offer a spatiality that is mobile and dispersed and not an embodied one, so the videos discussed in this Chapter use a diaristic procedure, in the sense of Wieland and Akerman, to stay in the present time (C.3.1) and document an understanding of 'path'. The upwards view works form an allegory for journey in the sense that they document the material path while its contingent (transitional) dimension as a frame is also shown, harmonising with the allegory of reality Russell found in Akerman's diaristic film *News from Home* (1977). In this image a contained space within a subway train, is shown to be open-ended with indeterminate boundaries.¹¹⁵

¹¹² The unobtainable present time in Smithson. This section of path affords debate, one that is made up of multiple Speakers and audience members who may heckle (C.3).

¹¹³ The path is a social structure, a frame in the work. Smithson was a theorist in perspective (Roberts, 2004, p. 75-76). For Smithson perspective was a way of understanding space developed in the Renaissance to offer a view that accords with the ideologies (social structures) of the time.

¹¹⁴ The title of this video work is derived from 'we all live under the same sky' a well-known collectivist proverb. This proverb describes a sociability that is a levelling out of experience, horizontality is brought to mind and the sociability of sharing exemplified by social media apps. In contrast, *we all look at the same sky* describes an experience of individuality, one of viewing and imagining, a looking outward.

¹¹⁵ In narrative works that use pathetic fallacy techniques, the sky, and the weather more generally, is used as a symbol for emotion.

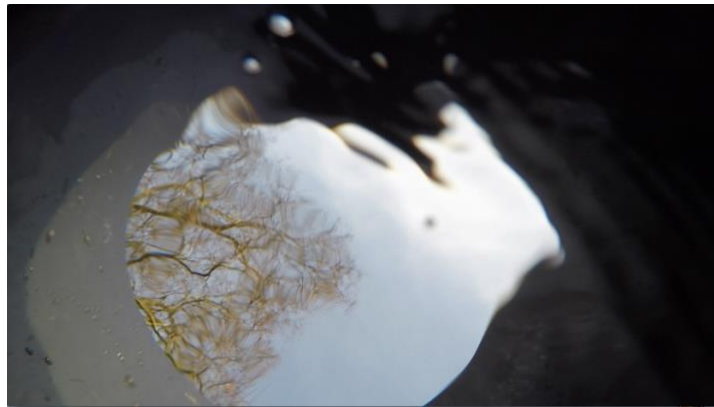


Figure 17. Digital video still from *we all look at the same sky* (2019) showing the upwards view.

Chiastic form

The video work experiments with the chiasmus. Meaning is made at the centre of this form in the tension between two phrases, and this complicates the final forms in the work. To make meaning, each phrase is imagined in the context of the other. This video uses two landscape phrases that consider 'the ground', while not videoing the earthly ground (as a surface). The first documents the horizontal dimension through a movement taking place above the path of walking. This initial scene is of the contrail drawn by a passing flight as it adds an oblique line to a grid of other such lines. These lines document a linear horizontal movement while referring to the network of paths below and to the video image itself, also a path (C.1). In the third part of the video, sunlight falling into the video image is caught by a layer of bubbles on the camera lens. This is suggestive of Brakhage's work with water and light, where unusual visual material is shown in accord with an investigation of the material of film (C.2.1). The caught sunlight is shown as a bright layer in the video image. The light is caught and it does not reach the ground. The real in the world is imagined in relationship to the sun's warmth, and the quality of light spilling.

In the image, light is caught in a layer and shown within a frame, and while this may seem paradoxical, its unbounded quality is also shown.¹¹⁶ The layer of light and air is in a frame within the dispersed image frame.¹¹⁷ This image presents a double infinity, that is, an opening out. It is

¹¹⁶ Smithson's film connects his structure to infinitude in the concluding scenes of his film, through light's unbounded quality.

¹¹⁷ This is an image that doubles and evokes for me something that Nancy writes on schema, where he said '...in beauty the schema is the unity of the presentation; in the sublime, the schema is the pulsation of the unity. That is, at once its absolute value (magnitudo) and its absolute distension, union that takes place in and as suspension. In beauty, it is a matter of accord; in the sublime, it is a matter of the syncopated rhythm of the trace of the accord,

not a final form in the sense of a finished conclusion or destination. In contrast to the horizontal movement shown by the lines (contrails) drawn by the airplane on its elevated path, and the layer of light (a plane in mathematics) shown in the video, the centre of the chiastic form, the point of tension, is occupied by a section of video of one of the trees that line the path. An image of branches, bare of leaves, documents the plane tree's upward reach. The occupied centre is a quality found in Wieland's work, for example, where she used her chiastic form to inscribe a condition of monumentality on a politician in *La raison avant la passion*, (C.3.2).¹¹⁸ It is also found in Smithson's film when he documented his spiral structure using a downwards view (C.3.1). The vertical dimension is brought into view by this tree, however the earthly ground is not shown in the image. The viewer reimagines the quality of rootedness, of reaching down below the surface.

The path of walking

In the video works presence is performative in the sense of Butler. This shown in the practice which documented walking and being in the landscape. The discussion that follows is on the path of walking.¹¹⁹ In this site, areas of lawn that were to be re-seeded were not available for use. As a result, in and around the area designated to free speech, access was restricted to paths. These paths are denoted as lines in the Hyde Park visitor's guide, which contains a map sharing a lexicon with many other such maps of public green space in London and elsewhere in the UK. Lines (the lexicon shared by maps) favour the social above the individual.¹²⁰ While Smithson used a playful or 'playing at' approach, he seems to deliberately set out to frustrate in order to complicate the final form of his spiral path. This practice uses a playful, 'playing at' approach, a form of errancy, that is also shown in *A line made by walking* (1967) by Richard Long an artist who, like Smithson, worked within the Land Art movement in the 1970s.

Long used a playful approach and explored the relationship between paths and lines by pacing back and forth, his footsteps bending the stems of grass in a field. In his practice Long explored paths and the landscape in ways that 'leave most of the journey up to the viewer's imagination' (Solnit, 2002, p. 271). Photographic documentation of *A line made by walking* indicates that

spasmodic vanishing of the limit all along itself, into unlimitedness, that is into nothing (Nancy, 2003, p. 230). For Nancy 'the sensible thing is the beautiful, the figure presented by schematism without concepts. The condition of the schematism is nothing other than freedom itself' (2003, p. 239).

¹¹⁸ The centre can be understood in mathematics as the point of focus of a circle or sphere. It can also be the point (centre) of an activity or the point of a process on which it is focused.

¹¹⁹ Butler tells us, '...performativity is not a singular act but a repetition and a ritual which achieves its effects through its naturalization in the context of body, understood, in part as a culturally sustained temporal duration' (Butler and Salih, 2010, p. 94).

¹²⁰ This lexicon is foundational for online mapping apps.

where the grass is bent, a change in the colour of the grass is recorded as a tonal change. The repeated gesture of Long's walk is marked by a line (Ingold, 2016, p. 44-45). In his artwork Long complicated the final form, using light to bring his path into view; by bending grass he changed it to reflect and disperse light and this caused a tonal change, which Long photographed.¹²¹ The photograph of Long's artwork can be viewed as documenting a process-based artwork. The process of walking back and forth to create a line and its subsequent erasure as the grass unbends or is replaced by new growth being as much the artwork as the recorded mark.

Forms of path, a dispersal 'text'

For Ingold a track is 'near 'the ground surface, it is not quite of the earth and not quite of the air ' (2015, p. 13). Footprints can be found 'near the ground 'and for Ingold, Long's artwork, *A line made by walking* shows this, as Long's 'line 'is formed by bending blades of grass and is therefore, above the ground (2016, p. 45). Long's path is not reductive as material is not removed, however, this form of path, as well as reductive paths, are more often made through the collective action of many individuals rather than the work of one individual alone (2015, p. 63). *A line made by walking* is also not an additive path as no material is added. In some ways my video path can be considered additive through the addition of water. However, the videos do not form a path in a concrete sense, instead, they document an understanding of 'path'.

Although footprints are 'individual', paths are 'social' and one 'cannot read individual movements from a path, but only those commonly or collectively made '(2015, p. 63). It is possible that Long is exploring a concept of path in a way relating to the 'stories-so-far' of relational space. Long's obscuring of his individual movements raises questions relating to the use of lines to denote paths as these represent the collective (social) dimension of path and not the subjective (individual) one.

Footsteps

The practice uses a playful way of working, 'playing at', a form of errancy. Footprints are un-joined up markings, dispersed points registering 'emplaced movement' (Ingold, 2015, p. 63). They graphically (and mathematically) represent velocity as direction and speed of movement. In the videos, the camera videos the upwards view through water in a container. The water's movement creates waves and the reflections of these from the container's sides creates a

¹²¹ This is taken up again in relation to my 35mm works and the eroded photographs and drawings. In his film, Smithson is shown drawing his film walking and running on the spiral path of his structure (C. 3.1). Using frottage and dispersed graphite marks and assembling sections of tape links to the footprint testifying to the moment of presence.

'dispersal' text. In the walking videos, the image is dispersed in relation to the footsteps. Each subsequent footstep, although fleetingly conjoined with the previous, is released; the sites of touching, where the ground is contacted, are dispersed.¹²² This is documented through the walk with the footsteps and the water moving in relation to this and to the upwards view. The image is dispersed as light is dispersed through being refracted away from the camera lens, due to the movement of the water that results from footsteps.

Although the video may seem to be made of a collage of images that were recorded separately or rendered using digital applications, post-production is not used in the video process. In this video and in the practice more generally the duration of videoing is the duration of viewing, and it is the environment of the camera that is adjusted. The videos can be thought of as a drawing. They draw the landscape while moving through or in a space. The movements (exemplified by footsteps in the walking videos) are documented by the upwards view image. This is a way of working akin to frottage, attesting to a moment of presence, a mutual exchange in a performative interaction. Drawing, through an action of frottage adds to the video system, denoting presence in the landscape and acknowledging the embeddedness of practices (in material as Massey theorised) (C.1). While the decision was made to centre the discussion on drawing more generally to support the aims of the research, the idea of frottage is implicit in much of the video work and frottage is taken up in later in the discussion on the drawings on tape in Part 1.2. When making this image, the camera lens was cold due to the winter weather, and for example, adding warm water to the container caused the air bubbles to collect on the lens. This is another way that surfaces are brought into view. The surface of the lens is shown by the bubbles, the surface of the moving water can be seen, bringing into view the surface of the image and the contact with the earthly ground. The moving water disperses the surface plane of the image and documents movements in the site. This denotes presence and path of walking, and the material path, the ground, 'grounding' the image. The dispersed surface denotes the filmmaker, in effect catching the viewer watching, and precludes consumption.

Free thought

All the images discussed in this research are constrained images, constrained and contained in order to free thought (to space/time, to Burgin's thinking otherwise). The image presents the frame (as transitional) as shown in Wieland's work where the picturesque landscape views can

¹²² This is taken up in Part 1.2, in the discussion on documenting the viewpoint and the material site in the video *water drawing*. Nancy's proposal that touching 'does not touch itself, at least not as seeing sees itself' builds on a paradox, 'the impossibility of touching inscribed in touching' (Nancy, 2003, p. 235).

be understood in the context of the wilderness, the sublime landscape.¹²³ In this sense this image documented the weather, the cold air and the sun, presenting temperature and light as a material registration. The lens-like behaviour of the moving water and the bubbles that form a layer of air on the camera lens, disturb the camera's focus and complicate the perspective view. The sky in this image takes the form of a sphere. The bubbles seen as spheres on the camera lens are shown in the context of the sky (also a sphere in the image).¹²⁴ This is an image that doubles and while the sphere is a shape that does not have an edge in actuality, it is a form that appears in the image because it is framed by the edge of the apparatus. The apparatus is brought into view in so far as the container is a frame. The container, shown in the image as (the circular) frame, is also a metaphor for the strategies of practice.

While the material and processes of videoing are brought into view this way, and the illusory quality of the image is acknowledged in accord with structural film's enquiry into its own material production, the constraints and strategies of the practice concerns are also included. The strategies discussed in this Chapter put the frame under pressure and this way bring pressure to bear on the practice concerns (frames) supporting criticality more generally. The work is anti-fixity and full of movement, dispersing the frames to afford subjectivity. Its chiasmic forms and inverted concepts, unsettles, decentres. As a consequence the quality of subjectivity follows and a process of looking outward and elsewhere opens up to new associations and ideas.

Discussion

While documenting a path implies revealing a destination, the method of videoing presents playful inversions and a chiasmic form. The unstable surface of the video image is where 'the ground' as a dimension of actuality is revealed. This video image documents surfaces, for example the surface of the path and the surface of the camera lens to present the spatial environment of this site while not representing it. The practice 'grounds' the video in space/time, in accordance with structural materialism in film.¹²⁵

¹²³ The sky is the limit, is another proverb, one that expresses a more literal sense of open-endedness. The sky denotes a limit to our reach as individuals in terms of corporeality, and in this sense Smithson's work reaches out to the infinitely large and small. However, his, and all the works discussed in Chapter Three, bring to mind something Nancy writes on the sublime as a limit in his discussion on the role of imagination and freedom. 'In the sublime, the imagination qua free play of presentation come into contact with its limit – which is freedom. Or, more exactly, freedom itself is a limit' (2003, p. 238).

¹²⁴ This is an image that doubles reaching for infinitude. For Nancy 'the sensible thing is the beautiful, the figure presented by schematism without concepts. The condition of the schematism is nothing other than freedom itself' (2003, p. 239).

¹²⁵ Massey theorised space/time as made up of embedded material practices (2015, p. 9) (C.1).

Dispersive practices put pressure on the frame to deny its agency. To make meaning, the viewer is required to continually reconsider their own position in relation to the image and the real in the world, and in this sense, the work affords the viewer agency to critically engage with its political effects. While the artworks present inadequate representations of the landscape in the sense of Lefebvre by not including images of the ground, a form of errancy, they support a realist mode of film practice (C.1). The work can be placed in a relationship with the Fluxus strategy of taking 'a realist tack, returning life to normal' although 'with a new kind of attentiveness' (Waxman, 2017, p. 213).¹²⁶ This thread is developed in Part 1.2 of this Chapter in the discussion on the video *water drawing*, where a viewpoint is documented (a destination) in relation to the essential point of view, a final form in perspective.

The downwards view is a way of documenting site that accords with scientific explorations and geographic surveys for mapping site as locations. Considering Smithson's film in this context the helicopter closely following Smithson's seemingly vulnerable walking and running figure gives a sense of scale to the artwork. However, while linking scale with duration, he also linked the film to contemporary newscasts from the conflict in Vietnam and to current stories-so-far (Massey) of his milieu. Through linking to scientific explorations of site and newscasts, Smithson also highlighted the ways in which the downward view lends authority to an image as Massey argued (2015, p. 107). Steyerl pointed out we were already growing accustomed to what used to be called the god's eye view in 2012 in her essay *The Wretched of the Screen*, in e-flux journal (p. 14).

In contrast, when pathetic fallacy techniques are used, the information captured in an upwards view video can legitimately correspond with emotion. In accord with Smithson's opposition to ideational ways of understanding the landscape, this way of sorting information, illogical and therefore irrational, emotional, and illegitimate, versus rational and therefore logical and legitimate seems unproductive. This is a way of representing site that is outmoded and because the videos include information more usually excluded or removed from representations of site, they question the hierarchy denoting legitimacy of information. As an example, images of sky are commonly used in pathetic fallacy techniques attributing emotion to sky, to underline emotion and foreshadow events, and this is widely recognised.¹²⁷ Instead, the practice alludes to

¹²⁶ Smithson shared concerns with Fluxus, for example, using inversions. He participated in the Fluxus issue of Aspen Magazine an early Correspondence Art publication (C.2.2).

¹²⁷ Pathetic fallacy is not always used. Experimental films such as James Benning's *Ten Skies* (2004) and Michael Snow's, *La Région Centrale* (1971) present long takes of the sky to the viewer bringing the viewer's attention to sky, by presenting sky in the contexts of film. However, sky and clouds (weather) are used in a different way, as an

verticality's connection to attention. Attention in terms of register (scale/duration) is key to the scene when Speakers are present in the site and, once someone steps up, people attend.

The video works invert the now familiar downwards view and, in this sense, reconsider the direction of the argument (Massey, 2015, p.107). The practice documented paths and the paths in Speaker's Corner in actuality, offer a circularity that is supportive of relational process and thinking. This is denoted in part by the video's recursive forms and the visual puns in the image.¹²⁸ While the paths in this site more pragmatically facilitate the circulation of pedestrian traffic, the path in the second site, Parliament Hill and Fields, climbs a rise to a viewpoint until, falling down again, it takes a chiastic form.¹²⁹ The video *water drawing* uses the dispersive strategies discussed in Part 1.1 to document the site in a context of the essential point of view in perspective. The practice used a video process that does not offer the embodied view that facilitates Renaissance perspective. The discussion in Part 1.1 is on the ways in which the video *we all look at the same sky* complicates the final forms while documenting a walking path in a site. The discussion in Part 1.2 is on the ways in which *water drawing* complicates the final forms to document a section of path that is somehow its destination.

Part 1.2

water drawing (2019)

Digital video

Duration: 5 min

Site 2: Parliament Hill and Fields, Hampstead Heath

While this site supports sociability more generally in its role as a park, it exists in the affective balance between individuality and sociability (Massey, 2015, p. 188). The name Parliament Hill refers to a hilltop viewpoint, from which the viewer looks down toward London.¹³⁰ When it is considered in this context as a viewpoint, the site is marked by a threat to the existence of parliament.¹³¹ Massumi theorised threat as affective and non-linear (Gregg et al., 2010). The

emotional signifier to support film's illusionistic quality, in well-known films exemplified by *L'Avventura* (1960) by Michelangelo Antonioni.

¹²⁸ Exemplified by the use of different meanings of the term 'plane' in each of the video's three parts. Initially a line (contrail) denotes the flight of a plane, in the third part sunlight falls and is caught in a plane (used here in the mathematical sense), while a plane tree's vertical reach occupies the centre of the chiastic form.

¹²⁹ In the way of the Jack and Jill nursery rhyme.

¹³⁰ This is where Guy Fawkes (1605) is said to have waited.

¹³¹ Massumi theorised on the ability of affect to change our (individual, subjective) future by inflecting our present experience. In the future, a past threat will continue to be a real one because threat is affective. Massumi may seem to be linking affect to temporality (the future) however this is a distinctly non-linear understanding of time. Affect is dispersed through space/time in a way that accords with the notion of space as becoming. To exemplify his point that threat is affective he quoted a news headline (on the subject of bird flu) that was published in 2005, 'The next

personal becomes relevant affording agency to the individual in how the site is conceptualised (Arendt, 1998). While the viewpoint is somehow the destination, a focus in the site, the final form is complicated and the destination becomes unavailable in the sense that it is always being made.

water drawing experimented with the chiasmic form as a way to document a viewpoint in this site. This video, similarly to *we all look at the same sky* in Part 1.1, does not offer an establishing shot to introduce the viewer to an initial point of view or establish a position in the video. In this sense the video image is a leap into the unknown for the viewer. A continual reassessment of position is required to understand the image. In this video the container is on the ground and the camera's initial position when videoing through clear water is ambiguous. The sky seems to rest within the container, touching the ground.¹³²

This site was known for many years as Kite Hill by those that live locally. This name denotes an activity, a game of balance that brings the materiality of the upwards view into play. It is where the experience of sky and air becomes a movement, an upwards drift. For Ingold, the ground and air mix, the ground does not present a clearly defined surface (2015, p. 65). Footprints can be found 'near the ground' (2015, p. 13). The sky 'drags' on the surface of the earth 'touching' the ground (2015, p. 65). In this video image the container is placed on the ground and although this container is touching the ground, the video image is of the sky in some ways corresponding with Ingold's point. A path is 'near' the ground, it is 'not quite of the earth and not quite of the air' (2015, p. 13). In this video, tapping and moving the container on the ground disperses the surface plane of the image as the water moves in the container. Movement is shown as dark graphic shapes suspended in the upwards view which disperses the image of sky. The shapes mark presence in a performative intervention in the material site, and in this sense, they draw the site.¹³³ The moving water points to the artist and brings to mind Wieland's unstable handheld

pandemic ...does not exist yet' (Gregg et al., 2010, p. 55). The effect of the threat was real and did occur in 2005. While this news did not (and may not yet) occur, it is a potential uncertainty reaching toward the future.

¹³² The sky denotes a quality of infinitude suggestive of the discussion on the sublime and the limit in Nancy, where becoming is presentation. It 'takes place in effort and feeling' (2003, p. 234). 'Sublime presentation is the feeling of this striving at the instant of rupture, the imagination still for an instant sensible to itself although no longer itself' (2003, p. 235). 'Or again, the striving is striving to reach and touch the limit. The limit is the striving itself and the touching. Touching is the limit of itself: the limit of images and words, contact – and with this, paradoxically, the impossibility of touching inscribed in touching, since touching is the limit' He observed that 'Touching does not touch itself, at least not as seeing sees itself' (2003, p. 235).

¹³³ Butler observed, 'what we take to be an internal feature of ourselves is one that we anticipate and produce through certain bodily acts, at an extreme, an hallucinatory effect of naturalized gestures' (Butler and Salih, 2010, p. 94). This connects with the discussion in Deleuze when he observed, 'In Foucault there has been a hallucinatory theme of doubles and doubling that transforms any ontology.' He refers in part to the 'double capture...which is constitutive of

views. Wieland's long film is a very personal image (C.3.2). It becomes progressively unstable, inconclusive, and in this way, it draws her journey.



Figure 18. Digital video still from *water drawing* (2019) showing an initial view of sky.

Drawing

Some initial supporting works were made using frottage drawing and in Part 2, *the sky is taught by falling*, frottage drawing is included within the title. The drawings were made with downwards strokes to apply graphite to the glue side of sections of tape.¹³⁴ In the practice, tape connotes the material of film, its strip of celluloid, and the linearity of the path. The drawings reference the inversions as well as the material support for the image used in film and photography, where the image is printed from a negative. When the tape is inverted and applied to a paper support, the drawing's downward strokes are also inverted. Bringing tape to the foreground suggests a refocusing of the image. Bringing a performative movement and object (structure) together in an image reframes to defamiliarise and brings attention to the material existence of the object.¹³⁵

Tape brings duration into view in a material way. Using tape as a support for an image is unconventional. It is more usually used for repairs which may be temporary. While its fragility supports connotations of ephemerality the image is fixed in place, bringing the two-dimensional and superficial quality, the ephemeral, illusory quality of images, into play.¹³⁶ While montage is not used in the video images, sections of tape are used in the graphite drawings. In this research

knowledge–Being' that is effected by power relations in the sense of a force or 'strategy', as 'any experience is caught up in relations of power' (Deleuze, 2016, p. 92).

¹³⁴ In the way of walking along the centre and edges of things. The adhesive side of the tape corresponds to the emulsion side of film.

¹³⁵ The title of the video *water drawing* is a pun referring to the constraints of the work, its frame (the container in this work is a bucket) and the graphic shapes that are shown through the interruption (of light) dispersing light. There is a tension between the terms in the title of the work, each term acts on the concept indicated by the other.

¹³⁶ Deleuze theorising between the two registers of image and text observed, in Foucault, power relations are instrumental in the sense that they '...set up relations 'between' the two forms of formed knowledge' and these '...two forms of knowledge–Being are forms of exteriority since statements are dispersed in one and visibilities in the other.' (Deleuze, 2016, p. 92-93).

montage is thought of as possibility, as a synthesis, sublation, a vertical movement, a lifting up (C.2.1). For Sergei Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov, montage was a disavowal of continuity, the idea of becoming, always on the move. These drawings 'play at' mimesis in a way connected to poetry and humour, as a lifting up, and in this sense the poetic form and the subjective movement between metaphoric concepts (Rees, 2017, p. 34).

Chiastic form

Light falling within the container and documented in the video is material from the site and it plays a key role in video and photographic practice. In this artwork, water waves direct light as waves or flows, away from the camera lens bringing light into view through its intermittent absence.¹³⁷ The ripples mark presence in a material connection with the ground and the sky in the sense that material of the sky can be found near the ground. The initial part of the video is seemingly in greyscale, and the water acts in part as a filter. The third part of the video is the second landscape phrase. The camera view is restricted to close in through an introduction of material from the site.¹³⁸ The view is contained, constrained to the layer of water by the materials suspended in the container. The camera focus is close in, and while the sky can no longer be seen in the image, and the amount of light that can reach the camera is reduced, paradoxically, the resultant image is more colourful. The material process of videoing is brought into view showing the camera's functionality. The illusory quality of the image is acknowledged in accord with structural film's enquiry into its own material production.

The middle part of this video's chiastic form is occupied by the section of image where material from the site is introduced (poured) into the image. By adjusting the focus of the camera this way, using material, the image space is brought into view. The chiastic form in this video is found in the juxtaposition of views in some ways suggestive of Snow's exploration in his films *Wavelength* (1968) and *Breakfast: Table-top Dolly* (1976) and Brakhage's experiments with water and focus (C.2.1). Adding material from the site adjusts the focus and clarifies the position of the graphic images within the video image; the images are revealed to be close in and the focus is a moving one. The effects of the movements in the site were documented in their

¹³⁷ Newton's third law of motion supplies an explanation. It states, for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. In this case when tapping the container of water, the force applied to the material of the site, the ground, by the container is the same as the force applied to the container by the site. The site contributes energy to the container and therefore to the water, and this in part creates the ripples. In this way, energy from the site is placed into the container and can be seen in the video as dark shapes. Energy is not classed as material in physics and light when considered using wave theory is also energy. However, when light is a flow of photons it seems possible in physics to consider light as material.

¹³⁸ Adding material from the site to the art, in the sense of Smithson in his non-site work.

ephemerality in the video image and it has a specific material relationship to the site. In this sense, *water drawing* explores the path in the tension between a perspective view of the sky and a close view of material. The video does not offer an embodied view and for the viewer, a continual reassessment of position is required, complicating the final forms. The process is documented in the video through the effects of the exchange between presence and the site, the movement of the water and light intermingling, as containment and scattering.

Smithson presented still photography in *The Spiral Jetty* as central to his position. In his film black and white photographs are a focus (the reveal) (C.3.1). This research draws initially on Smithson's work as a practitioner, his role shifting to one of theorist as this research progresses. He observed in his writing on Central Park, 'certain still photographs are related to the dialectics of film' and he discusses a photograph in an exhibition of Olmsted's art at the Whitney Museum of American Art, which 'has a rawness of an instant out of the continuous growth and construction of the park'.¹³⁹ Smithson explains, it 'indicates a break in continuity that serves to reinforce a sense of transformation' (Flam, 1996, p. 160).¹⁴⁰ *The Spiral Jetty* and the picturesque park share a conceptual space and the focal point of the spiral is clearly not the destination in his artwork (3.1). The view of the landscape from the focus of the spiral is not an ultimate view (as would be found at the end of a traditional jetty); instead, moving along the jetty's rocky path, a careful consideration of footsteps intersperses downward glances to the circling landscape in a dispersed and looping pan, repeated on the return lap. In some ways similarly, in Hampstead Heath a path draws the walker up the slope of Parliament Hill. Recently a sort of lay-by for walkers has been added beside the path, with an illustration representing the view, and more benches have appeared, scattered over the summit of the hill. However, the path continues relentlessly, ignoring the destination implied by the informational sign and benches. The walker on Parliament Hill, is drawn on and the view is outwards, to the panorama of the surrounding hills and distant views of London while the path, unbroken, draws the walker down the hill again.

Smithson is shown moving (running and walking) along the jetty path, and he pauses at the end (centre) of the spiral. And yet this is clearly not the destination. Once he reaches this point, he

¹³⁹ Nancy sees something more libertarian, more of an undoing of fixed relations, a becoming of something different to itself, revising the theory of sublime to go against the class-based idea of sublimity Smithson found in Europe. In Smithson, the sublime comes back to the people (Flam, 1996, p. 162).

¹⁴⁰ There is a connection with the picturesque in Wieland and Smithson (his synthesis) and the open-ended line of thinking about space as becoming in Massey, in the sense that space is continuously being made. In accordance with Massey's analysis of space/time as trajectories and made up of material practices, in Smithson, once 'the picturesque became nostalgia for church authority' (exemplified by T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922)) 'it ceased to be the democratic dialectic between the sylvan and the industrial' (Flam, 1996, p. 162).

turns away leaving instead an impression of duration. The path of the jetty takes the walker on a journey to nowhere, and by effectively moving a walker around in the landscape on a seemingly useless journey the jetty path becomes its antithesis.¹⁴¹ If *The Spiral Jetty* is physically visited, the futility of walking along the spiral as a path subverts the sense of destination inherent to path. Once the spiral's focal point is reached, retracing is the only real option unless, during drought, the water is low enough to step off the jetty. However, even during a period of low water, to step off the jetty at the focal point seems outside of the artwork's grammar.¹⁴² Following the spiral path, the view likewise circles. As the path is followed inward to the focus, the attention is drawn outwards to the circling panorama of the surrounding hills and distant landscape. Although drawn by the spiral path to a centre focus, the walker of this path is then drawn outwards by the path and attention continues outwards, dispersed by the rocky path to the distant sky and circling view of hills and horizon.¹⁴³

The discussion In Part 2 of this Chapter includes ideas on the site as a multiple, through a connection between this site and the Eiffel Tower, which facilitates an examination of a site(s) through this monument's symbolic and historical connections, and its many replicas increasing the scale of the site.¹⁴⁴ The path taken between ideas and associations can be different each time in the sense that the constraints and strategies of the practice put the frame under pressure. While the material and processes of videoing are brought into view this way, the constraints and strategies of the practice are also included. Pressure is brought to the practice concerns (frames) supporting criticality more generally, and the illusory quality of the image is acknowledged in accord with structural film's enquiry into its own material production.

¹⁴¹ The path's antithesis is the journey (Massey's stories-so-far). The picturesque in Smithson, his synthesis, is made up of multiple timelines, a multiplicity of subjectivities in a negotiation with the material landscape (Flam). Smithson theorised on the park in his paper published after the completion of *The Spiral Jetty* (Flam, 1996, p. 157-171). He derived his understanding of the picturesque from Burke's analysis of Kant (C.3.1).

¹⁴² The jetty was constructed during a period of low water and was subsequently underwater for some time. Since then, the lake has receded, and the water edge is some distance from the jetty structure.

¹⁴³ To reach the end of this jetty does not seem the point of this artwork and although the word point is used here meaning reason or focus, used another way, point can demarcate a destination in maps using GPS technology (a technology which generates a point cloud). As an example, Google maps mark a destination as a point with a dropped pin. Mathematically, a point has no area and as such is infinitely small. Point used this way also seems inadequate when applied to Smithson's jetty.

¹⁴⁴ The structure lending itself to being understood as a line, without an inside or outside (as Barthes observed in his book *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies*) links the tower to Smithson's spiral path and to the other artworks discussed in this research (1997, p. 14-15). Barthes connected the tower to dreaming and observed it offered a new experience, a birds-eye-view. It was of the time, he further observed, of the 'great inclusive visions' by Victor Hugo and Jules Michelet writings of earlier that century that depicted scenes referring to the downwards view (Barthes, 1997, p. 9). For Barthes the downwards view of Paris from the tower clarified some understandings of the city and its underlying structures. Calle's photographic work, *A Room with a View* (2002), which she made while spending one night in the Eiffel Tower, and her video work *Double Blind / No Sex Last Night* (1996) is discussed in Chapter Three. In these works she investigated the daydream in its role as a destination while bringing into view underlying structures.

The discussion that follows is on the video *the sky is taught by falling* (2023). The destination in this site is not reached. This practice documents a re-purposed railway embankment that is now a footpath. The path follows an engineered line, a cut, slanting up through the rolling landscape until at halfway a vault marks it unavailable.¹⁴⁵ The video documents a journey to and away from the studio and this title includes a frottage drawing, 35 mm and medium format photographs and eroded sections of photographic prints.

Part 2

the sky is taught by falling (2023)

Digital video

Duration: 15 min 45s

Title includes: 35 mm and medium format photographs, eroded images on conservation tape, graphite drawings on tape.

Site 3: Parkland Walk, North London

This slender green space is a converted railway embankment built to connect Alexandra Palace with Finsbury Park mainline station. In this way, community politics, ways to organise groups of people (the picturesque, the everyday) is brought into a relationship with the Victorian idealism that instigated the Great and World Exhibitions.¹⁴⁶ The footpath can be followed to just south of Highgate Woods where the way is blocked by the ivy festooned vaults of a road bridge. These vaults, now barred, mark the entrance to a tunnel used by the railway to bypass the woods underground. Here walkers disperse to the network of paths and roadways in this area of woods and the footpath can be taken up again north of Highgate woods. The shape of this site as a line, and the mid-point hiatus in the constraining path freeing walkers to other sites and ideas, introduces a tension in the path when the path is thought of as a social structure.¹⁴⁷ In this

¹⁴⁵ The vault is a structure that holds a void. The Eiffel Tower has vault shapes that correspond with the vaulted tunnels on Parkland Walk. However, the vaults of the original structure (in Paris) are not functional ones but are instead added on to decorate a structure of trusses. The Parkland Walk vaults are functional in that they hold a void; however, they are re-purposed now as bat habitats.

¹⁴⁶ Also known as Ally Pally, the people's palace, Alexandra Palace facilitated community activities in this sense playing a role in education. This site is the subject of early downwards view photographs by Cecil Shadbolt that were taken in 1882 from his balloon. The building supported a progression in terms of media, and initially hosted a BBC radio studio and then subsequently a television studio. For Smithson, the picturesque was 'a democratic dialectic between the sylvan and the industrial'. He supported using heavy machinery when working with the landscape. as he did himself to make his spiral structure. Smithson points out that man is part of 'the natural order of things' (Flam, 1996, p. 162). He further observed the intervention could be a positive one, and 'the farmer or engineer that cuts into the land can either cultivate it or devastate it' (Flam, 1996, p. 164).

¹⁴⁷ The title of this video work is derived from a metaphor, which refers to the sky as a vault (as spatial and voidal). The centre of a vault in terms of its point of focus (reason) and the point of a process is to hold a void. There is a tension

sense, the personal becomes relevant affording agency to the individual in how the destination is conceptualised. As this site supports sociability more generally in its role as an urban green space, it exists in the tension between individuality and sociability, and this is affective in the sense of Spinoza in Massey (2015, p. 188).

Chiastic, recursive forms

To summarise the discussion earlier in the Chapter, the research draws on the genres of landscape art practice within the traditions of experimental, documentary and structural film practice. The sense of destination inherent to the path shown in the video works is a dimension that it shares with a narrative work in so far as a conclusion can be understood in terms of a destination and this is a final form.¹⁴⁸ The focus that is afforded by a perspective view is in this sense, also a destination.¹⁴⁹ Following on from this in Part 2, the video *the sky is taught by falling* complicates narrative's conclusion and perspective's focus, and the destination of the path documented in the video is presented as unavailable, unobtainable in the sense of the works discussed in Part 1 of this Chapter and in Chapter Three. The practice experimented with the chiasmus to complicate the final forms. The video used two landscape phrases that each reconsider 'the ground', while not videoing the earthly ground (as a surface).

The works discussed in Part 1 of this Chapter are a leap into the unknown, in so far as they do not establish an initial position for the viewer by including, for example, an establishing shot. In contrast, in the first phrase of this video's chiastic form initial scenes show a transition from the darker interior of a building to outside. In this sense *the sky is taught by falling* offers the viewer a position.¹⁵⁰ While the material and processes of videoing are brought into view in these initial scenes, and the illusory quality of the image is acknowledged, the constraints and strategies of the practice concerns are also shown. Pressure is brought to the frames, exemplified by the container shown as a circular frame,

between the vault and the monument in this work that suggests the interpretation of the present time as 'the void between events' Smithson derived from Kubler (Flam, 1996, p. 34). (C.3.1). This work considers the materiality of the upwards view; the weightiness of air (downwards forces, gravitational pull). It progresses from the unusual social environment of the 2020 'lockdown' in London when the initial practice explorations for Part 2 were carried out.

¹⁴⁸ A conclusion can be expected in a documentary form.

¹⁴⁹ For Smithson perspective was a way of understanding space developed in the Renaissance. It offers a view that accords with the social structures (ideologies) of that time (Roberts, 2004, p. 75-76).

¹⁵⁰ An emergence from inside to outside, is coming into being, showing the schema, schematism as emergence, In his discussion on the sublime, becoming is presentation in Nancy. It 'takes place in effort and feeling' (2003, p. 234). Following on from this, and considering the sublime, Nancy tells us, 'Sublime presentation is the feeling of this striving at the instant of rupture, the imagination still for an instant sensible to itself although no longer itself in extreme tension and distension ("overflowing or abyss")' (2003, p. 235).

and in the sense of a frame as a constraint in the practice. The roof's edge, shown in silhouette in the image, adds new geometries to the frame. While the walking path is denoted by the moving water and the roof edge that runs along above the material path, the roof shapes disrupt the circularity formed by the container.



Figure 19. Digital video still from *the sky is taught by falling* (2023) showing a building in silhouette.

In this section of video and in the video more generally, the camera's focus is challenged by the moving water and a reduced level of light; the sun being no longer overhead. The sky is overcast with clouds and the resultant image is reduced in colour to almost black and white. The initial views of roof edge are followed by a series of views of sky and the surface of the moving water. The camera continually readjusts its focus and the views are shown in a seemingly layered series of shots, rather than a smooth progression there is a montage of views.¹⁵¹ The repetition and reduced visual material encourages the viewer's attention to relax. The moving aperture takes on an almost animated role and the container becomes at some level the image itself and almost a form of vehicle, a person vehicle or a character moving through a space. The moving water points to the artist and recalls Wieland's durational image. In the video practice the views of sky through moving water denote presence and similarly, in Wieland's film unstable picturesque views present the delay that is a quality of a physical journey. Wieland's image draws her journey as a movement, an (individual) path within the wider social realm. This way of working is also found in Akerman's film, *D'Est* (1993) and in Calle's works, discussed in Chapter Three.

When the camera finds a different focus, without warning the image elongates. The viewer is shown a perspective view of a tree, one that borders the urban footpath in the ad hoc, self-seeded quality of the marginal urban space. As such the tree shows the effects of duration in

¹⁵¹ Montage is thought of here as a possibility, a lifting up.

terms of weather and proximity, to people, to other trees and to structures more generally. The footpath makes its way through neighbourhoods and is bounded by the backs of houses and criss-crossed by road bridges. Unlike the plane trees in Hyde Park, the trees here hold aloft a layer of ivy, boundaries between ground and sky (the horizontal and the vertical dimensions) are blurred.¹⁵² This image occupies the centre of the chiastic form. While the video offered a position to the viewer in the initial scenes, insofar as this image was not seemingly foreshadowed, the sudden change in the image to a perspective view of a tree is not expected. While the image itself is changed by the sudden perspective view of the tree, it does not suggest the rootedness of the tree in the sense of the plane tree or the plane tree's upwards reach shown in the video *we all look at the same sky*. In the earlier image, footsteps disperse the image while contrails draw a horizontal path reminding the viewer of the walking path below. In *the sky is taught by falling* the moving water likewise documents footsteps, however the aperture, when thought of in terms of an animation, affords a drift of attention, the experience of sky and air becomes a movement, an upwards lift.

Attention moved aloft from the earthly ground, the tree acts as an interruption in a banal sense, and the viewer's attention is caught up in the sudden presentation of a perspective view.¹⁵³ While a tree can suggest ideas of the sublime in nature, this tree's seemingly sudden appearance brings the impression that it had accidentally got in the way. It brings into view its materiality, the physicality of the tree as a structure that has taken up a position in the path. In addition, its collective quality, as a collection of parts, insofar as it is made up of leaves, branches, stem, roots and in the video, colour is also shown, is seen in a context with the apparatus of videoing, and the camera which finds its focus. Along with the tree's material proximity (to the camera) the dimensionality of the site (a footpath) is suggested. Its material width is a constraint, and in this sense the material path is brought into view in the video image. Although this may seem paradoxical, the path's material dimension is the 'point' (the destination) in this video and it occupies the centre of the video's chiastic form.¹⁵⁴ The tree is brought into view in the sense that Olmsted's photograph marks a transformation that it is a break in continuity, in Smithson (C.3.1). In this image destination is shown as a break in continuity, an interruption, complicating the final form.

As the image continues the upwards view of sky and water returns and is welcomed. In this

¹⁵² There is a sensitivity to boundaries, margins, in these works.

¹⁵³ Interruption is becoming a mode in art practice in this research.

¹⁵⁴ The centre of the chiastic form in terms of the point (reason) or the focus of a process.

part of the video, the second phrase of the chiastic form, while the walking path continues as before the image seems unstable. The perspective view threatens and while trees are more generally included in silhouette, sometimes the perspective view is also shown.¹⁵⁵ This section is approximately twice the duration of the first phrase, affording the quality of delay offered by a physical journey, and harmonising with the temporal dimension of the walking path. The walking path documented in this video does not physically reach the vaults, where the rail tracks continued underground, instead, in the installation form with the video on a loop, when the camera moves under a structure, the image reverts to the initial inside view of the building.¹⁵⁶ When shown on a loop, the beginning and final scene of the video show a frame within a frame, (a double infinity) an image that doubles, opening outwards. The rectangular structure of the bridge (the void beneath it) becoming the interior space of the building (a void in architecture) in the dispersed video image. The tree's material existence, the affective threat of interruption, the vault in the sense of a structure holding a void (but somehow more than a void), and the material path as a destination of sorts, are placed in a relationship that is the final form in this work.

Black and white photographs

The artists discussed in this research include multiple works and forms in their titles. The practice uses video, still photography and graphite drawing. The 35mm and medium format photographs consider the material of film and its processes. All the works discussed in Chapter Three include still images within the film or video image, and these play an important role in the works. There is a final view of a photographic object. This brings the material of the film into view; a film is made up of still images (frames). In these images the photograph refers to the material practices that produce the site and the film itself, complicating the final forms (C.3).

Davey included a survey of theorists on photography in her book and draws on Barthes and Benjamin amongst others (2002, p. 25). For Davey, delay 'the waiting and the anticipation, are all part of the process' and affords a thoughtful approach. While in film photography accident and contingency can be embraced these can also be thought of as negative attributes (2002, p. 45). While some early photographers used techniques exemplified by splicing along the horizon line, to correct the overall exposure of an image, this can be

¹⁵⁵ Threat is affective in the sense of Massumi.

¹⁵⁶ This image is shown on a loop. This bridge is not a structure that is built using trusses or vaults however all bridges manage and balance forces.

equated with postproduction in digital works.¹⁵⁷ Alfred Stieglitz' opposing move in his *equivalents series* (1924 to 1935) of black and white photographs of clouds have long been an interest. These images do not include a horizon line. Each can be exhibited using multiple orientations and configurations and, in this sense, there is a leap into the unknown for the viewer.



Figure 20. 35mm photograph, *the sky is taught by falling* (2023).

The video practice complicates the perspective view, in some ways progressing from the line of thinking in Stieglitz' work. Still images and photographs are included in the works discussed in Chapter Three. To consider this, photographs are included in Part 2, within the video work's title. Screened in the exhibition space with other works in its title, a drawing and a photographic print, the affective space of the viewer is acknowledged in the presentation more generally. While screens can vary in size and a video can also be projected, the space of the viewer is the space of installation, in the sense of Spinoza (Massey) and offers a subjective experience of the works in a public context (the gallery). The viewer is required to reassess their position to the artwork in a very material way as they physically move in and through the space.

Data

For Massey space is full of movement that potentially contributes to the condition where politics can exist by allowing what she describes as productive ruptures, dislocations, fractures, and divides (2005, p. 48). For Massey the spatial, space/time, is open and full of movement and productive gaps, and this is an understanding of space as distinctly dispersed

¹⁵⁷ Early cameras were not able to photograph a bright sky, bright sea, and dark land mass, as an example, without one element being over or under exposed.

(2005). Like many of London's key sites, Alexandra Palace is marked as a destination by mapping apps, and on those maps posted on informational notice boards along the footpath. The Parkland Walk does indeed recommence on the far side of Highgate Woods to continue to Alexandra Palace; however, a midpoint suspension of the path unexpectedly releases a walker from the narrow confines of a single footpath a busy road and the scattered jumble of undirected paths and roads through urban woodlands.

By videoing with the container, allowing a small area of sky to represent the whole, the videos reference systems of representation and coding as well as these hidden connections of digital space (Lefebvre, 2014, p. 742-743).¹⁵⁸ The reinterpretation of physical movements by the water in the container also points to some aspects of the abilities of satellite mapping and mobile devices that collect data and then interpret it. For example, apps on mobile devices can record numbers of footsteps taken through interpreting motion. The videos could be seen as a photographic record of the sky and movements could be interpreted to locate or track, map the terrain of the location or maybe even gain information about physical abilities and health. While conscious of the potential of data, however seemingly tangential or playful a form it may seem, in the artworks the complexity of the data in documenting the path, through corresponding with the inherent complexity of a personal journey as a 'story-so-far', resists the instrumentalist purpose of data collection. The intent contained in applying the label of data collection method to the videos (which, when placed in this context, seem unconventional), is through re-contextualising to draw attention to the very many available forms of data collection.¹⁵⁹

Some thoughts

A thought-changing event led to the decision to disappear within the text and to have a more personal relationship with the images. Although art practice is personal, there was an occurrence within a small group of researchers outside of art practice that emphasised the differences between the fields of art and design. Left with a feeling of being thrown, an

¹⁵⁸ This is shown in the Eiffel Tower meme by *We Are The Virus* (2020). The Eiffel Tower is a thread in the practice, as a multiplicity in the sense of multiple sites, and how it is conceptualised in actual and online space. The practice exploration *vault* series was instigated pre-pandemic and is investigative of a multiple artwork using video and still photograph. It brings different temporalities together in an examination of the vault which is a structure holding a void, as a process and device. It brings together the quarter height copy of the monument at the Paris Hotel in, Las Vegas, Nevada and a pier, St Ives, Cornwall. While travel restrictions disallowed this path of exploration (documenting copies of the monument in its site(s)) *vault series* is also supportive of the investigation of an aesthetic economy online within a multiple artwork. In this sense the next steps of this research supports an investigation of an ethics, in the sense of Rancière and Smithson's open-ended (aesthetic economy) and not one that is distributed.

¹⁵⁹ This research progresses from *Inside here*, an artwork that re-purposes a native phone app as art media.

uncalled-for negation, the continuing attack on identity by an individual, and the exposure to danger instigated the decision to excise personal threads. This does not mean that the intention in the practice is unfelt but comes from the warning about what may be safe to share. Considered in this way, a hiatus in the guiding path can be thought of as playing at or playful but may also benefit a careful approach. The practice presents, in each artwork, a delicate balance and in this sense, a question of belonging and authorship. In working this way, affording agential involvement and imaginative (re)thinking, do the artworks belong wholly to the artist? If the work is autonomous, affording agency, where does authorship reside?

In a structured relationship within the collection of makers, internal critique can be damaging. Care should be taken of the maker and of the artwork, when they are speaking of the delicacy of authorship – the pain of authorship. There was a break in confidence, leading to the possibility of disavowing something that is important. The practice was subject to being thrown rather than elevated and this affects the stance on how the artwork can be seen, the artwork conflated with a personalised process of disavowal of me. This is a fold in the Deleuzian sense where there is a question of subjectivation however, the subject was cancelled (Inwood, 1992, 283-284) (C.2.1).

The Parkland Walk offers a playful path or one that is playing at particularly when considered in the context of Alexandra Palace as a fixed destination. It seems inadequate due to the missing section where walkers are released to other paths. However, it is interesting to consider the concept of destination(s) in a connection with this midpoint suspension. The relics of the railway, the vaults' multiple meanings and the remaining platforms along the footpath facilitate a durational understanding of the site (as scale/duration). At the vaults, the disappearance of the path re-presents the purpose of the embankment to the walker, the rail tracks that by-passed the woods underground. The guiding, constraining path and then sudden unexpected release to other paths, is suggestive of the path in Wieland's film *La raison avant la passion* and Sophie Calle's video *Double Blind* which also have a mid-duration release, and this is somehow the destination in these works. In this sense, the video work *the sky is taught by falling* releases the viewer to subjectivity within an experience of the landscape, somehow the destination in the work.

Chapter Conclusions

The works resist linearity in the sense that they complicate the notion of a final form. While documenting a path implies revealing a destination, the method of videoing presents playful inversions and a chiasmic form. The video images document surfaces, for example the surface of the path and the surface of the camera lens (as a process using scale/duration) to present the spatial environment of sites while not representing it. The practice 'grounds' the image in scale/duration (space/time).

Site-as-marker, the path

Dispersive practices put pressure on representation, a frame in this work in the sense of Lefebvre. Rancière's aesthetic principal speaks against representation and against the partitions that can be understood as frames, the lines of paths, to which this research refers. In the analysis Deleuze made of Foucault's writing he observed, power relations are '...a floating line with no contours which is the only element which makes the two forms in battle communicate.' He speaks of the difference in apprehension afforded by image and text however, as Deleuze further explains, 'any experience is caught up in relations of power.' (Deleuze, 2016, p. 91-92). Interruption disallows the quality and mimicry representation requires. This research developed a practice-based definition of the monument, and the video works present an interpretation that is in accord with structural materialism in film, drawing in structural film's quality of reflexivity. The self-referential, self-interrogative quality of the images disallow representation and instead bring process and material into view. The video works investigate their own production in the context of site-as-marker and landscape more generally. The monument takes the form of a path, and the viewer is placed in the affective context of the unstable landscape. To make meaning the viewer is required to continually reconsider their position in relation to the image and the real in the world in an iterative process suggestive of the mutability of concepts in Deleuze.

Non-site

In Part 2 of the practice, *the sky is taught by falling*, the camera continually readjusts its focus on the surface of the moving water. In the image the moving aperture takes on an animated role. The container becomes at some level the image itself, and a form of person vehicle, as containment and scattering, the path and subjectification (C.3.1). The moving water points to the artist and suggests Wieland's durational image. Her unstable picturesque views present the delay that is a quality of a physical journey, and draw her journey as a movement, an (individual) path within the wider social realm. Butler tells us, 'What we take to be an internal feature of

ourselves is one that we anticipate and produce through certain bodily acts, at an extreme, an hallucinatory effect of naturalized gestures' (Butler and Salih, 2010, p. 94). The practice is self-consciously performative and a repetition of presence that critically engaged with ideologies, structures, and the rituals that engendered them. The videos draw a path and in doing so a new line is drawn. Drawing is a form of passage between nothing and something, a coming into presence, a rupture, another interruption.¹⁶⁰ The video image, unsettles, subjectivity becomes more and more displaced, dispersed, consequently affording new ideas.

Deleuze observed, concepts are mutable in Foucault, and he found 'a hallucinatory theme of doubles and doubling that transforms any ontology' (Deleuze, 2016, p. 91-92). Doubling points towards infinitude in the sense Nancy theorised in his writing on the schema.¹⁶¹ In his discussion on the sublime Nancy links presentation to freedom, so presentation, schematism, can be understood as an ethics. The work moves towards an ethics in the sense of a true democracy as proposed by Burgin, affording the viewer agency in accord with Rancière's aesthetic (C.1). The discussion that follows in Chapter Five is on manifestations of the picturesque found in the works and the path in its role as a schematising dimension.

¹⁶⁰ An emergence from inside to outside, is coming into being, showing the schema, schematism as emergence. In his discussion on the sublime, becoming is presentation in Nancy. It 'takes place in effort and feeling' (2003, p. 234).

¹⁶¹ Victor Burgin links thinking otherwise to open-ended ways of thinking that are 'fundamental' to a true democracy (2020, p. 138). Democracy in this sense, is an ethics. Nancy links presentation to freedom and in this way presentation, schematism, can be understood as an ethics. 'The condition of the schematism is nothing other than freedom itself' (2003, p. 239).

Chapter Five: Thesis Conclusions

Research Question

This PhD research by project contributes to the understanding of artistic use of dispersal in critical-documentarist, landscape-based art practice and the ways in which strategies of dispersal might be productively used in art practice. Therefore, this research asks: what are the ways in which strategies of dispersal contribute to the image space and the frame, considering the thinking around the frame as a conceptual device and how it is viewed?

Contribution to new knowledge

The video practice is within the traditions and parameters of experimental, documentary, and structural film, and the three landscape genres. The research brings materialism into a relationship with the notion of space as becoming. In the works discussed in this research dispersive strategies deny the frame agency and material and ideological structures are brought into view as frames. This is a paradoxical understanding of the frame as a transitional edge in the sense that it affords the viewer agency in the work, opening the possibility of political debate. The frame is figured as links to transition and movement. Meaning cannot be captured and fixed. Instead, artworks connect with the experience of the viewer in the sense of the recursive process found in Burgin's politics of the daydream. This is a non-teleological understanding of space and the landscape.

The frame(s)

Chapter One introduced the research methods and contexts that are elucidated in Chapter Two. To summarise, the works discussed in this research avoid closure in the sense that the frame(s), the image frame and the path (including the monument as a path), complicate the final forms. Politics determine the terms of change, however, the application of political theory is outside the scope of this research, and points to something that could be looked at elsewhere (Massey, 2006, p. 13). The works discussed in this research deny the frame agency and open the possibility of political debate, in the sense of a critical approach to life more generally. This is the debate to which this research refers (C.1).

This research positions practice as theory to deliver a cognitive content in a similar manner as theory expressed using other forms (C.1). The works in this research are closely read, a way of analysing works borrowed from literature. All the artists in this research have authority in their fields and this is recognised. To support this approach, practitioners, for example Atwood, take

the role of theorist. Atwood's writing is drawn on for her theorising on poetic forms and her analysis of manifestations of the picturesque (derived from Burke) in the writings of immigrants from the UK to Canada and America (C.2.3). Smithson's role likewise shifted to one of theorist. *The Spiral Jetty* multiple artwork is within his exploration into his notion of non-site and this approach can be understood as an investigation through art practice, similar to practice-based research (C.3.1). Theorist filmmakers Peter Gidal and Malcolm Le Grice's work is fundamental to film, and they are also drawn on (C.2.1). Atwood's formulation of the picturesque landscape, where the close-in is considered in the larger context of the wilderness, is in accord with the play in understanding and the sense of movement between forms that is afforded by Warhol's durational films and shown in Le Grice's structural images (C.2.3).

Discussion

Chapter Three is on the strategies found in Joyce Wieland's *La raison avant la passion / Reason over Passion* (1969), Robert Smithson's *The Spiral Jetty* film (1972), and Sophie Calle's *Double Blind / No Sex Last Night* (1996). The discussion in this thesis is on the freeing up of thought affording the quality of drift in a free play of associations. These are durational works, and this research considers the approach taken to different temporalities: Smithson's affective inclusivity and materialism, reaching outwards and inwards, the drift through the material landscape that Wieland does so well, the cut that is presented in Calle's work by her changing roles, shown in the way the way the body is positioned in these works and the relational dimension they investigated. Duration implies latency and Burgin writes against latent interpretations and instead, for the process of thinking and dreaming, the dream-work in Freud (2020, p. 137). This is where the political effects in the works can be found. Duration holds an idea of time and an effect of time. Artists used strategies of dispersal to effect a transformation, a latency that is also implicated in editing and the imaginaries of film.¹⁶² In this sense these works are errant, their recursive forms produce a surplus of images, a vapourisation of structures while the interruptions afford an after image, a process of subjectification, that is somehow also an understanding.

There is a sensitivity to boundaries, margins, in these works and to the extent that the (transcontinental) path and the monument is a frame(s), the path functions in accordance with Rancière's partitions and Deleuze's lines of power relations. It can be thought of in terms of the social within which it is a structure implying distribution, connoting stasis. Insofar as the path is

¹⁶² The artworks can be understood as a series of intuitions as Paglen observed in his artist's talk on *The Spiral Jetty* (Dia, 2020, p. 132).

the material landscape it can be understood within the notion of the picturesque explained by Atwood implying movement and agency. In this sense, the path plays a role of a schematising dimension. In the works discussed in this research the path is in accordance with Nancy's writing on the schema in *The Ground of the Image*, where he theorised the schema as a recursivity that is fundamental to imagination.

This look that unifies the sensible and sensibilizing unity (the chiasmus of the two is what properly makes up the gesture, the site, and the art of the schema) forms the schematizing operation, which does not first give an image but is nonetheless related to "something like an image" (for which Heidegger introduces the expression "schema-image"). The schematism operates through a "like-an-image" that constitutes at once a quasi-image and an image of image, that is, in the first or final instance, an antecedence of the image to itself, its imaging arrival or occurrence: its imagination. This imagination is what sees before and outside itself the look that it will present to us and allow us to represent to ourselves (2005, p. 89).

It may seem unusual, to bring materialism into a relationship with the notion of space as becoming. However, by identifying and treating social structures as paths, and bringing into view lines or frames (Rancière's partitions) in the contexts of relationality (the becoming landscape) and materialism, the works discussed in this research show the other side of materiality. While the landscape is shown in these durational works it is in the sense that space is inherently dispersed and not static. This is in opposition to Bergson's position that when thought of together space adds stasis to time (Rees, 2017, p. 23) (C1). He seemingly imagines space in terms equal to representation, however, the interest was in time (as duration) and In *Creative Evolution* (1907) he acknowledged duration 'in external things' (Massey, 2015, p. 24). Space is open-ended and vast, space/time is always on the move. While the ways in which the political effects are treated in these works bring into view the social structures (the frames) that afford representation and stasis, presence is shown in very material ways. The real in the world is kept in view. The strategies used by these artists to document the landscape are suggestive of Massey's notion of subjectivity as practiced where space (as space/time) is 'made up of embedded material practices' (2015, p. 9) (C.1).

Chapter Four discusses the practice and a practice-based interpretation of monumentality. The self-referential quality of the videos brings process and material into view. Each work investigates its own production in the context of site-as-marker in a specific site and the landscape more generally (C.4). In these works, structural film's reflexivity and qualities of self-referentiality and self-interrogation are drawn on and support the strategies that interrupt the quality and mimicry representation requires. The monument takes the form of a path. The viewer is placed in a material relationship with the work in the sense that to make meaning the viewer is

required to continually reconsider their position in relation to the image and the real in the world (C.2.1). All the works are contained works, constrained by the methods they use and paths they follow. All the works discussed document the landscape while using a camera that is 'stationary' within a moving vehicle. They present a version of the fixed frame that is exemplified in Akerman's film *News from Home* (1977). She filmed in a contained space and shows it to be open-ended with indeterminate boundaries. In her image, the 'stationary' camera is enclosed within a moving vehicle (the subway train). However, the image moves through the frame; people enter and leave the image, interrupting the illusion. In Akerman's film and all the works discussed in this research the image moves along a path that is also documented. The works resist the linearity of the path, and they complicate the notion of a final form (C.3). In the practice the camera is in a container of water. The container is shown in the video as the image frame. In this sense the practice constraints are kept in view. The container becomes at some level the image frame and a form of person vehicle. It denotes the path and its dispersed form as a frame in the video image points to subjectification and the journey, containment and scattering (C.4).

The attention in this research is on the language of film and video, on what is being said and how to say it. Not to privilege one or the other but to consider the language of the experience and the ways in which the political effects in these works are treated. Rancière called for an aesthetic economy (one that is not representable or distributed) and Massey's notion of a practiced subjectivity and the position she supported that space is inherently dispersed disallows its representation and the political structure representation requires. In the agential works discussed in this research space is shown as still being made, in some ways acknowledging the unrepresentable quality of Rancière's aesthetic economy.

Aesthetic existence involves us in an indistinction of "same" and "other." It is thus a truly unrepresentable moment (but not a "beyond") wherein the density of being in its "here" is invaded by a "nowhere," a "nothing" (Thomas Wall, 1999, p.15).

These works show present time is unobtainable in the sense Smithson derived from Kubler's formulation where actuality is 'the void between events' (Flam, 1996, p. 34). In the works discussed in this research space is presented as unrepresentable and can be thought of as 'stories-so-far' insofar as space is made up of trajectories of material practices and still being made in Massey (C.1).

Picturesque, landscape and schematism

This research developed a portrait in the sense of a series of encounters between image and

actuality. Encounters between the abstract and material led to a theoretical understanding as imagination gives rise to schematism: passage and metaphors of pathways and frames as doorways, mapping and space, the becoming of a concept, the relationship of abstract lines and figures giving rise to distributions and presentations, figure and figuring giving rise to forms. Smithson started to work this out in his concept of non-site and in his writing on the American picturesque (his synthesis).¹⁶³ His position in this research shifted to one of theorist and while the thinking was against Hegel as ideational, his materialist approach led to a constellation of registers and forms in his work. Smithson documented his Land Art structure in his experimental film *The Spiral Jetty* and gives us the key in Part I in the sections on driving to and from his site (C.3.1). Wieland's *La raison avant la passion* likewise gives us a key to her work in Part 1 (Preamble). Wieland brings into view the illusory quality of film in the initial footage of views of sea that are inverted (disallowing consumption). Her film is made up of predominantly landscape views and exemplifies the 'picturesque' signature Atwood described. B. Elder observed the image frame is shown to be a transitional device in Wieland's work more generally and therefore, cannot denote a space that is bounded. Her path of dispersed landscape views progresses from this position (C.3.2).

Calle's experimental video work borrows from structural film to present another variation of the containing frame. Her work is investigative of boundaries and agency. While sections are documented from within a moving car the container (frame) is also clearly denoted by the practice constraints she derived. This is shown in the image itself, during her narration in Part 1 and Greg Shepherd's closing remarks in Part 3 of *Double Blind*. In these sections an exaggerated fixed frame is shown redacting part of the image and bringing her constraints, in the sense of a conceptual frame, into view in the image itself (C. 3.3). This is the key to the work. Part 2 is made up of the 15 days of travel positioned in the centre of her chiasmic form, the unavailable present time, Kubler's void in Smithson (Flam, 1996, p. 34). The still image of a bed refers to Warhol's durational work, exemplified by *Sleep* (1964) and referencing the diacritical movement that Hollis Frampton found. The open-ended process of the daydream and the illusion of film and dream or dreaming is brought into the context of corporeality (materiality) (C.3.3). Calle's photographic work, *A Room with a View* (2002), is also discussed in Chapter Three. In these two works she investigated the daydream in its role as a destination while bringing into view structuring ideologies. She made *A Room with a View* while spending one night in the Eiffel Tower. The discussion in Chapter Four included ideas on the site as a multiple, through a

¹⁶³ The notion of picturesque extends a condition of equality in this research and in this sense the artists share a fundamental sensibility.

connection with the Eiffel Tower, the structure itself, which facilitated an examination of a site(s) through this monument's symbolic and historical connections. Its many replicas increase the scale of the site.

The path as a frame

All the works discussed in this research are constrained by the paths they follow and the ideologies they investigate, and in this sense, they are contrary to the sublime. However, they exist in an affective balance, a shift in apprehension between the sociability represented by their constraining paths (a social structure) and the individuality of a practiced subjectivity of Massey's discrete multiplicity (stories-so-far). In this way they each offer non-teleological understandings of the landscape (C.1). Although these are very personal works, they afford the viewer agency in a way that somehow accords with the contradiction Arendt found in Kant.

Infinite progress is the law of the human species; at the same time, man's dignity depends on that he be seen (every single one of us) in his particularity and, as such, be seen - but without any comparison and independent of time - as reflecting mankind in general...It is against human dignity to believe in progress. Progress, moreover, means that the story never has an end. The end of the story itself is in infinity. There is no point at which we might stand still and look back with the backward glance of the historian (1989, p. 77).

The works discussed in this research by Smithson, Wieland, and Calle engage with the personal, that which Hannah Arendt explains is irrelevant in relation to the public realm (1998, p. 71). While they are constrained works, they offer forms that are recursive, vertiginous, and open-ended. Affect, imagination's corporeal dimension, shows experience to be spatial as well as temporal. Affect and time are also shown to be non-linear in these images in the sense of Massumi (Gregg et al., 2010, p. 55) (C.4). While presence is shown and the landscape is presented as material, meaning cannot be captured and fixed and so the landscape is documented as a becoming (a non-teleological understanding as relational in the sense of Massey).

To do so these artists bring their notions of the landscape to the structural film strategies they developed and to their experiential, spatial practices. The images, re-configured as uncertain, lose the stability that affords the distinctions between what is, and what is relevant, that representation requires. The beautiful is somehow relevant in public space, when considered in the sense of shared understandings in Kant, although this is ritualised. In these works, the personal and the material landscape in its picturesque and sublime manifestations, is also shown. While they are investigative of overarching social structures they found in Modernity and

the nation-state, the works are supportive of theorising identity as constituted in the relational (C.2.1). The landscape becoming relevant to the viewer is a thread that can be taken up in next steps. The foundational position, the manifestation of the picturesque in Wieland's practice, and the thread in structural film that Frampton identified as diacritical, is suggestive of an unfixing of identity, a destabilising of identity, concept and image (C.2.1). This research is not conflating the picturesque with the diacritical mark Frampton found in film practice. Nor did it set out to completely tease out these distinct threads, however, there is a relationship to entertain, a relationship that does something.

This research comes out of Rancière and his theorising on critical artworks more generally. The introduction to the written thesis pointed to a conclusion and this is a destination in research. The final form of this thesis is complicated in the sense that art practice is iterative and mutable (C.1).¹⁶⁴ The practice critically engaged with the material structures and ideological structures (and rituals) that engendered them. In all the works discussed in this research the performative dimension is found in the contrast between the linearity of the path and the dispersed form of the image denoted by the way the body is positioned in the landscape. This leads to the quality of drift and the dimension of materiality that can be found in all the works and they move towards a new economy as proposed by Rancière. Dispersive strategies afford the possibility of a different outcome each time and this can lead, consequently, to new ideas (Burgin, 2020, p. 138).¹⁶⁵ Each work documented presence and a material path using film or video in ways supportive of thinking and agency. The works discussed in this research deny the frame agency and open the possibility of political debate, in the sense of a critical approach to life more generally. Democracy is an ethics, and in this sense all the works discussed in this research reach towards an ethics and this is the debate to which this research refers.

Next steps

This research is in the field of art practice and will be of interest to researchers in the fields of art and design using film, photography and video and those in fields with an interest in the language of moving image, documentarist practice, materialism, and the traditions and parameters of the

¹⁶⁴ Barbara Bolt draws on Judith Butler's theory of performativity and iterative, generative practice and on Derrida's theorising on repetition and iteration to explore the place of iteration in research in her paper *Artistic Research: A Performative Paradigm* (2017) (C.1).

¹⁶⁵ Burgin links thinking otherwise to open-ended ways of thinking that are 'fundamental to the goal' of a true democracy (2020, 138). Democracy thought of in this sense, as an ethics, brings to mind something Jean Luc Nancy writes in his discussion on the sublime, where he links presentation to freedom and in this way presentation, schematism, can be understood as an ethics. For Nancy 'the sensible thing is the beautiful, the figure presented by schematism without concepts. The condition of the schematism is nothing other than freedom itself' (2003, p. 239).

landscape genres in film and moving image practice. Lippard observed that Conceptual artists considered communication in terms of distribution and the term distribution denotes a sharing out, a space that is bounded, partitioned in Rancière (C.2.2). This is indicative of where this research can play a part in an enquiry into an economy in the sense of Rancière's aesthetic.¹⁶⁶ B. Elder attributed a diacritical movement to the works of Wieland and the filmmakers from Toronto more generally, due to understandings of the landscape (as the picturesque and wilderness in Canada) and sensitivity to boundaries (K. Elder, 1999, p. 68). Smithson similarly found a sense of instability in the material landscape. He researched space and materialism while developing his concept of non-site and extended the notion of picturesque he derived from Burke to include using technology. All the artists discussed in the research experimented with technologies. The practice supports a thoughtful approach to the relationship between the advent of a technology and its absorption. While its absorption is not really the same temporality as its rhetoric, the transformation is spoken of, but this is also quickly absorbed, a new technology accedes other technology, absorbing disfunction as much as function potentially. While the online space can in some ways be understood in a progression from an activity of distribution, the non-linearity of temporality is exemplified in the online space in the presentation of a reordered past, present, and future.¹⁶⁷ This research extends to discussion on the space/time of the online dimension and the virtual areas, spaces and temporalities, scales of practice, latencies, dispersed forms and constrained images, presentations and distributions, of the material landscape.

¹⁶⁶ The artists discussed in this research engaged in the Correspondence Art movement and its strategies in their practices more generally. This art movement was an influence on the developing internet.

¹⁶⁷ *home is where the heart is* can be found on *itinerant space* journal Issue 2, in the form of a video work and in the book form iteration of Issue 2, in the form of a photographic object and text. A second video in this multiple work and an additional text can be found via the Society for Animation Studies site: Animation Studies 2.0. The intention in *home is where the heart is* (continuing) is to experiment with a multiple work, in the sense of Smithson's relational economy.

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The Overview of Practice for this thesis is in the accompanying document.